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THE
B O O K
OF THE
B O U D O I R.

BY
LADY MORGAN.

“Je n’enseigne pas ; je raconte.”
MONTAIGNE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.
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THE BOOK

OF

THE BOUDOIR.

RELIGIOUS AUSTERITY.

It is quite deplorable to see how many rational creatures (or, at least, who are thought so) mistake suffering for sanctity, and think a sad face and a gloomy habit of mind, propitious offerings to that deity, whose works are all light, and lustre, and harmony, and loveliness.

I have just had a visit from a pair of papistical pietists, in such a state of attenuation, that they look as if they had escaped from a besieged town after a month's famine. They had been keeping *black lent* (a fast, I believe, now peculiar to Ireland) which it would be difficult to persuade a Roman

cardinal to observe. I began to quote Swift's well known stanza—

“ Who can believe, with common sense,
That bacon fried gives God offence ?
Or that a herring has a charm,
Almighty anger to disarm ?
Wrapped up in majesty divine,
Does he regard on what we dine ?”

This was an impertinent interference; and they answered me very sensibly, by alleging that a special providence is a dogma in all religions; and that, at all events, they were bound to obey their church, or leave it! They had made their election. As they took their leave, Mrs. — came in from early service, with her prayer book in her hand, and all the anathemas of exclusive perfection in her sour face. Mrs. — is a high-church-evangelical protestant-ascendancy lady—once well known in the caste of Dublin gaiety, though now no less distinguished in the *album sanctorum* of “the serious.” What a look she cast on my poor little papists, as they passed her! Excommunication by bell, book, and candlelight, and death without benefit of clergy, in every scowling lineament.

“ I did not know these little bigots visited you,” said the good Mrs. ——; “ you are such a notorious heretic, to say the least.”

“ O ! I assure you the Catholic saints are much more tolerant than you Protestant saints. My attacks on Catholicism, as I found it restored in Italy by the holy alliance, have not lost me a single Catholic friend in Ireland.”

“ Because, after all, the papists don’t care for their religion *as a religion*. Theirs is a church without a religion, you know.”

“ I don’t answer for their zeal,” (I said carelessly, for I hate religious discussions) “ but I do for their sincerity, which the appearance of those poor girls attests ; they are worn to shadows by this hard lent : they do not even eat eggs or butter.”

“ What absurdity !” said my petulant and well-fed evangelical ; “ I have no patience with it.”

“ But you rigid protestants fast sometimes, when your church bids you ?”

“ Oh ! that is a different thing.”

“ No further different, than that you fast only to draw down divine vengeance on your political enemies, while they mortify their bodies for the

sake of their own souls. How Buonaparte's victories must have raised the price of salt fish ! Do you remember what a number of general fasts we had during the war ? I have often thought that we owed our success at Waterloo as much to dried ling, as to Wellington."

" Oh ! Lady M—— ! how can you joke on such solemn subjects ?"

" Joke ! why, if we are ordered to eat fish for the purpose of abating the pride and assuaging the malice of our enemies, there must, I suppose, be some efficacy in cockle sauce, and oyster *pâtés*—or why is meat proscribed ?"

" The intention of fasts is mortification, and we should abstain on such occasions from everything that administers to our appetites."

" Then you come back to the black fasts of my poor half starved little friends, which you deem an absurdity."

" But these Catholics," said Mrs. —— with true lady's logic, " abstain from no pleasure that comes in their way, even on Sundays. I hear they attend your Sunday evening parties."

" I give no Sunday evening parties, my dear

Mrs. —; but when the duties of the day are over, and every one has been at mass, church, or meeting, as opinion may lead them, I surround myself with the members of my own dear family; and if some kind and intimate friend drop in to enjoy a pleasant, rational conversation, he is sure of a place at my cheerful hearth amongst its affectionate *habitués*."

"But the sabbath is appointed to be kept holy."

"And is it not to keep the sabbath holy, to cultivate the kindest affections, and to encourage those genial sensations which lead us to live in peace with all mankind? He, whose first divine manifestation was at a wedding feast, and whose last was at the supper of the disciples he loved, has left us this, not more as a precept than a command."

"Aye, but what are your poor servants doing below stairs?"

"Precisely what their masters are doing above—enjoying innocently, and soberly, round a good fire, the rest which the sabbath brings with it—reaping the fruits of their industry in the comforts it provides them, and neither driven to a sectarian

meeting nor a public house, to pass their Sunday evenings in making bile or drinking whisky."

My saint sneered, and shook her head.

"I will not argue with *you*, Lady M——, but I will tell you what the world says;" and so having proved to me that I was considered by all the "really religious" people of Dublin as no better than one of the wicked, she made her exit, with a new accession of gall circulating through her system, and more than ever convinced, that to be happy is to be wicked!

It is strange that man, who suffers so severely from the violence of the elements, "who hath but a short time to live, and is full of misery," should go so far out of his way to multiply uneasy sensations, and should so often dash aside the enjoyment which reason sanctifies, to court the privation which nature rejects. In strong defiance of animal instinct, there has existed, at all times, a marked disposition to make a merit of self-denial and mortification, and to consider it a virtue to outrage those senses, and sadden that imagination, which were bestowed on man by the Deity, for the promotion of his happiness.

This absurd and cruel fanaticism has succeeded in masking itself alike beneath the cowl of religion, and the mantle of philosophy; and it has allied itself, with equal plausibility, to the pride of the stoic, and to the humility of the saint. After all that we talk of the march of mind, the world has made but little progress in moral philosophy. In all ages it has been “*par les mêmes propos le même jargon* ;” and it is curious to find, in Lucian’s treatise on dancing, (which is a defence of theatrical exhibitions against some *sour-craut* Prynne of the Porch,) precisely the same war between pleasure and pride, between nature and opinion, as is at this day waged in the conventicles of the sectarian zealots.

That the same practical errors, which proceeded from the self-abasement of the ascetics in the desert, should have flowed also from the stoic’s lofty conceptions of human nature, is, however, more startling than unnatural. The fanaticism of honour and virtue is not less fanaticism, than that of religion; it is not less exaggeration and irrationality. In both alike, temperament is more influential than argument, feeling more concerned than

opinion ; and both are alike founded on ignorance of the real nature of man, his organization, and his destiny.

In the earlier epochs of civilization, when the aspect of nature is rude and forbidding, and when social intercourse is replete with jealousies and dissensions, the conservative principle of life—aroused by the rough excitement to a proportionate resistance—arms itself with a corresponding insensibility to the attacks of externals. Wherever suffering habitually outweighs enjoyment, an effeminate susceptibility to trifling sensations is destroyed by the frequency of heavier miseries : and necessity develops in the mind a conscious superiority to fortune, founded on the pride of opposition, and on an intimate conviction of its own energies. The incessant warfare of savage life renders the contempt of pain and death an indispensable virtue ; and by a sophistry familiar under all circumstances, the animal forms for himself a system of notions, which strengthens him in the disposition congenial to the position of the moment. The philosophy of savages is stern, as their religion is gloomy : and

education and example are both brought to bear upon this desired case-hardening of the soul. The qualities which school-boys are taught to admire in the heroes of Roman story, exist in greater intensity among the red tribes of North America, than in the descendants of the wolf-suckled Romulus.

In the history of a campaign in Canada, mention is made of a tribe, called *The Devoted*, whose ultra-stoical notions would gain credit for the story of a Scævola or a Regulus. One of this tribe, to prove to the British officers his contempt for pain, cut a large piece from his own flesh, and flung it to the dogs. Yet these men were in the lowest condition of barbarism and social rudeness.

The external circumstances, which, by opposing man to natural evils, elevate and exalt his character, produce a very contrary effect, when they act through his misconceptions of their mysterious causes. Of physical evil the senses can judge with precision ; and the individual, measuring his sufferings by his powers of resistance, acquires courage through the conviction of internal strength.

But between man, and the intangible and inscrutable agents with which fear and ignorance people the universe, to “ride the whirlwind and direct the storm,” there is no measurement, no comparison. An intimate feeling of feebleness debases and degrades him ; and there is nothing so absurd and revolting that he will not attempt, in the anguish of his despair, to appease the phantom with which he cannot contend. Confidence in the wisdom and benevolence of the Godhead is the slow growth of developed civilization, and habitual security and ease. The divinities of barbarians are ever cruel, vindictive, and capricious ; and sanguinary and painful expiations, both personal and vicarious, are adopted, to purchase from heaven a reluctant abandonment of its threatened severity.* The religion of savages, under whatever specious names it is covered, has ever been essentially and practically a pure diabolism. The Scandinavians alone have been able to ally the belief in powerful

* The prevalence of these barbarous notions of the Deity, almost justifies the cynical observations of a French writer—“Ce fut donc toujours dans l’atelier de la tristesse que l’homme malheureux a façonné le fantôme dont il a fait son Dieu.”

and malignant deities, with the courage to oppose their wrath, by an heroic daring in acting and in suffering, boundless as the power with which it ventured to dispute.

With an improvement in the destinies of the species, a change occurs both in the philosophical and the religious sentiments of nations. Upon the immense influx of wealth into Rome, which followed the conquest of Greece and Asia, vast amelioration ensued in the social condition of the people. The usurpation of Augustus was followed by a long period of peace; and the sterner virtues became unfashionable, because they were no longer compatible with external circumstances. A sudden revulsion took place in popular feeling; and the Epicurean philosophy alone found favour in the eyes of those who had the means and the leisure for enjoyment. "Thessalian portents" ceased to alarm; the Augur laughed openly in the face of his brother impostor; and the clumsy state deities gave place, in the private creed of nobler spirits, to a speculative theism; while the corrupt and the vicious (misunderstanding the language of Epicurus) were, upon system, what

the vicious and corrupt have been, and ever will be, “upon instinct.”*

This connexion of cause and effect triumphs even over the permanence of dogma: and a practical relaxation of morose and austere discipline has uniformly attended the improvement of the social condition, even under the prevalence of the most rigorous creeds. Christianity, emerging from the deserts of the Thebaid, to take its place on the thrones of emperors, was no more the same austere and forbidding rule, than it was the simple Spencean democracy of its first Essenian proselytes; and the sturdy Calvinist of the north, in our own times, is a “boon companion” and a “good fellow,” in comparison with his fanatical ancestors of the third generation.

* When this short interval of happiness closed before the tyranny of the succeeding Cæsars, the increase of the slave population, and the inroads of the northern barbarians, the human mind again relapsed into a gloomy superstition. The influx of Asiatics and Egyptians into Rome, conspiring with a strong sense of present misery, revived the taste for portents and prophecies: the fantastical religions of the east were imported, with its other products; and thus the Western World was prepared to receive those manifold corruptions of Christianity, which, under the name of church, have so long held mankind in slavery.

The susceptibility of individuals to these external causes is, however, exceedingly various. In the most relaxed, and even corrupt, periods of moral sentiment and religious indifference, there have always been found persons, whose organization of mind has alone been satisfied by an indulgence of the most gloomy views of Nature and Providence. Fanaticism is very frequently a constitutional disease. An unknown and undefined, but a very sensible impediment in the play of the more intimate functions of life, deprives the individual of that "pleased alacrity and cheer of mind" which renders the bare state of existence delightful. There is a general insusceptibility to the minor pleasures of sense ; and the imagination is less excited by the innocent and amiable enjoyments of life. A mind thus constituted, ill at ease within itself, looks out on the world for objects congenial with its own feelings. Fear and disgust are its predominating sentiments ; and while it fabricates its deity in its own image, it is pained by the aspect of enjoyments in which it cannot participate. The hopes of another world can alone compensate for the miseries such beings inflict on

themselves in this : and while their speculative diabolism finds its account in self-tormenting, their misanthropy is indulged by imposing a similar austerity of manners, under the notion of strictness in religion, upon those who are more happily framed by nature for cheerfulness and enjoyment.

In England and Germany the prevalent disposition in religion is to gloom and mysticism ; while no effort can inoculate the French with a deep sentiment on the subject. The Irish differ, also, materially from the English in this respect. Notwithstanding the strong influence of political degradation, and the example of rigour exhibited by the prevailing methodism of the Saxon population, the Irish catholics are, for the most part, devoid of austerity of temper, though not always indisposed to needless self-denial ; and this circumstance doubtless contributes to render the people more catholic, and to indispose them for the reception of the gloomy, abstract idealism of the “ new reformation.”

Temperament operates widely and decidedly in preventing an uniform sentiment respecting the boundary between innocent and vicious indul-

gence ; and if that point were susceptible of a precise determination, the naturally morose would still continue to make inroads upon the liberty of their gayer compatriots, for no other reason than because it is their will and pleasure to do so. The most rigorous sectarians, indeed, are not consistent on this point, but are prone to relaxation in behalf of their own favourite indulgences. 'Those among them who are for "tenderness framed," have a patient indulgence for weaknesses, which are almost redeemed by the orthodoxy of their object ; and all excesses in the pleasures of the table, short of shameless inebriety, are permitted to the elect : while the uncharitableness preached in the pulpit does not the less find its way to the tea-table, and calumny and invective against all uncongenial offences, are doled out under the guise of zeal for uniformity of doctrine.

In England, the theoretical morality of the saints is so far above concert pitch, that humanity cannot sustain it in practice : and the result is, despair of acting up to duty, a consequent indifference to slight aberrations, and a proneness to take refuge in

the pre-eminence of faith and the worthlessness and nothingness of all works.

An undue severity of life is much encouraged by the doctrine, that the intellectual pleasures are alone conducive to happiness, and that reason and religion alike require the submission and mortification of the senses. The intellectual pleasures do not lie sufficiently within the reach of all mankind, to render them a common object of ambition and cultivation ; and it is not fair in the educated and refined to draw conclusions from their own conceptions, applicable to those of their fellow-creatures who are less fortunately situated. To the mere labouring classes, and to many who fill a higher part in the drama of society, the pleasures of sense are the great resources against *ennui* ; and even the most fanciful sentimentalists, in enhancing the value of intellectual delights, always *understand* (as the grammarians phrase it) an abundant table, warm clothing, and comfortable dwellings, which form no inconsiderable part of those pleasures of sense, which they who preach take care to enjoy.

However low mere sensations may rank in the scale of enjoyment, they are important from their

frequent recurrence, and it is only in a certain sense that the rigorist despises them. The anchorite, who feeds on roots and water, stipulates that the former should be well boiled, and the latter pure; and few are prepared to imitate the monkish fanaticism of mingling objects of disgust with their food, to mortify the senses. The great error, then, in comparing the intellectual and the sensitive pleasures, is the setting the use of the former against the abuse of the latter. The true sensualist, or Epicurean, is as averse from excess as the stoic; for he knows that excess is incompatible with health and with happiness. The senses are the creation of the same power as the intellect, and they are subservient to ends no less important in the human economy. To forbid their exercise and enjoyment, is to oppose the will and intention of Him, who made not man in his own image for the sole purpose of suffering and privation.

An old Irish woman, walking with her naked feet over some flinty stones instead of the green-sward, which offered itself to her acceptance, was asked why she chose this painful path. She replied, "Och! sure, I'd do more than that for sweet Jasus!" The world is full of such old women.

LIBERAL ILLIBERALITY.

I REMARKED, with pain, in many of my Italian friends, who have distinguished themselves by every species of sacrifice in the cause of liberality, an affected illiberality with respect to the arts. I have seen them turn with apparent disgust from the finest works of the greatest masters, when accompanying me to the Brera, the gallery at Florence, or the Vatican. They used to say, “ *There* is the cause of our ruin: we have preserved the elegant, at the expense of the useful. Raphael and Michael Angelo keep us under the Austrian yoke! Had the Russians loved the enfeebling arts, as we have done, they would never have burned their Moscow! The Venus de Medicis alone would have saved the Kremlin!”

Going one day to visit the now greatest sculptor of the age, Chantry, the gallant and celebrated General P——, having accompanied me to the door, made his bow, observing, “ I have made a

vow against the arts—the more perfect they are, the more mischievous.”

British *utilitarianism*, like Italian patriotism, has sometimes taken the alarm at the unproductiveness of the arts, and asserted that they are not physically necessary to our existence. Yet if the arts do not lessen positive evil, they at least augment the number of our sensitive enjoyments; and after the first necessities are supplied, all improvements in manufactures go but to that. Bread and water will support life—a hole in the earth will bid defiance to the elements—and a seal-skin in winter, and a few cockatoo feathers in summer, supply the coldest and the hottest regions with an adequate toilette. All beyond this is luxury, or means adopted to increase the sphere of pleasurable sensation, and to support a greater number of the species.

In this point of view, the fine arts are equally objects of statistic value with the useful manufactures. Their moral influence is an additional benefit. All declamation against the arts is folly, simply because they belong to the organization of man—to his love of pleasure and his ten-

dency to imitation. He who produces a fine picture, still produces ; and under that utilitarian consideration, his labour is at least as valuable as that of a goldsmith. These modern utilitarians are the Calvinists of political economy, and they strip their doctrine of so many graces, and render it such a “ *Praise-God-Barebones*” sort of thing, that they will soon leave their church without a female disciple : and woe to the church, or the system, that is deserted by the women ! They who would legislate for the world, must live in the world ; and the best intentions, aided by the best talents, will be found inadequate to serve the great cause of humanity, if its schemes, though perfect in the abstract, are inapplicable in practice to the actual state of society.

:

POETS' LOVES.

“ Never did poet touch a pen to write,
Until his ink were tempered with love's sighs.”

POETS seldom make good lovers, except on paper: there is no serving God and mammon. The concentration of thought which goes to the higher flights of composition, allows the feeling but little play. There has been much dispute, whether great actors are the dupes of their own art; but the great actors themselves have honestly avowed that they owe their successes to their coolness and self possession; and the poets, if they were equally candid, would own themselves in the same predicament. They are not, however, often inclined to make the confession. Horace says, “ we must weep ourselves, before we can make our readers weep;” and Pope's, “ He best can paint them, who shall feel them most,” goes very nearly to the same tune.

Passion, though eloquent, is not descriptive;

and delights not in those details which make the essence of impressive writing. Dr. Johnson, who loved, or fancied he loved, *his* she-bear, and was, therefore, (good bruin!) the better authority on the subject, has said, that “he who woos his mistress in verse, deserves to lose her;” and there is no woman of sense, who would not come to the same conclusion. I have heard an odd, paradoxical person assign a physiological reason for this. When one great organ, he says, is much and permanently excited, the development is at the expense of all the other functions. Head workers in particular, have uniformly bad digestions; and how can a man be heroically in love with a feeble stomach? I, who am no physiologist, can only appeal to facts. Pope, Dryden, Swift, Racine, Boileau, La Fontaine, were none of them famous as lovers; they had no ‘great passion,’ and excited none; some of them were absolutely insensible to female charms, and were sceptics to their influence. *La Fontaine*, with all his *naïveté* (which is generally so indicative of passion) was as cold as an icicle. “*Je doute*,” says Ninon, his friend, “*qu’il y ait un filtre amoureux pour La Fontaine. Il n’a guère*

aimé les femmes." I have some doubts of the sensibility even of the divine Petrarch, notwithstanding his thousand and one sonnets, which made so little impression on Laura. As to Ovid, his conceits are the antipodes of passion and feeling; and Anacreon was so mere a *roué*, that I should as soon take Don Juan for a martyr to the *belle passion*, as he. Cowley, who wrote so much upon love, was an anchorite. Prior, who wrote so freely on it, was a rake; and Rousseau, a poet in prose, wrote "Julie," and lived with Thérèse, who, besides being an *imbécille*, was neither chaste nor sober, and was "all for love, and a little for the bottle." When Doctor de Pruli chided Rousseau, a few days before his death, for exposing himself, in his weak health, by going to the cellar, Rousseau, pointing to Thérèse, observed, "*Que voulez-vous ? quand elle y va, elle y reste.*"*

A propos to St. Preux and his Julie: nobody thought of visiting Switzerland for its picturesque scenery, till Rousseau brought it into fashion. Now every body goes to drop a sentimental tear at

* "What would you have me do? When she goes to the cellar, she always stays there."

his “rochers de Meillerie,” and to visit Mont Blanc. It is well for *les rochers* that this lachrymal humour has not the properties of Hannibal’s vinegar ! What would our magazines do but for these visitors to the mountains ! I never see an article headed “Journey to Mont Blanc,” without being tempted to wish, that its author had done as Thérèse did by the wine cellar.

FANS.

MADAME DE GENLIS, whose general information it would be uncandid to dispute, (though it be so frequently perverted to substantiate her favourite doctrine of the optimism of the past), has attributed the invention of that pretty bauble, the fan, to the excessive modesty of the French ladies before the revolution ! In the happy times which preceded that terrible event, the times of Agnes Sorrel, Diana of Poitiers, Montespan, Pompadour, and Du Barry, the fan, it seems, was an object of

solute necessity to screen the blushes of the timid and bashful innocents who used them. “In times when the ladies often blushed, and desired to hide their embarrassment and timidity, they carried large fans. They were at once a veil and a *countenance*.* By agitating the fan the female concealed herself. In the present times ladies blush but little, and are not at all timid; they have no desire whatever to conceal themselves, and they carry only invisible fans, (*des éventails imperceptibles*).”

What a falling off since the times of the Palais Royal, and of the *petits soupers* at Monceaux, when the king's mistresses displaced his ministers, and made out plans of campaigns with their rouge, and patches for field marshals; when the de Boufflers and the Luxembourghs, the highest rank and oldest blood in France, were candidates on the list of royal concubinage; when nothing was natural but the children, and nothing moral but that which was past the power of sin. These were the times, the only times, when Frenchwomen

* Dans le tems où l'on rougissait souvent, où l'on vouloit dissimuler son embarras et sa timidité, on portait de grands éventails. Aujourd'hui l'on ne rougit pas, &c. &c. &c.—MAD. DE GENLIS.

blushed, and used fans : and well they might ! Let Madame de Genlis compare the Orleans family in the time of Louis the Fourteenth, when the duke poisoned his wife ; in the time of the regency, as reported by the Dowager Duchess of Orleans herself ; in the time of the husband or lover of her aunt, Madame de Montesson, and in the time of her own friend *Egalité* ; and let her compare these Orleans with the Orleans of the present times, the model of husbands, fathers, citizens, and princes—schooled, not by the lessons given in the cloisters of *Belle Chasse*, but by those of the world and of the circumstances in which he has lived—and then talk of anti-revolutionary modesty and timidity, and the origin of fans ! The fan, like every thing else, applicable to human use, has its origin in necessity. It is purely an oriental fashion, and was invented for personal relief and convenience in those ardent climates, where such portable ventilators and shades were indispensable. A Chinese dandy would no more be seen without his fan, than a Chinese belle ; and the fan of the Rajah serves far better purposes, than concealing the blushes and embarrassment of his wives. The

fans of the east are made of feathers. The domestic fans of Spain are suspended from the ceiling of the apartments over the tables, from which, during dinner, they keep off insects.

The fan was early introduced into the Roman church,—when the christians removed from the “cool grots and mossy cells,” in which their pure and persecuted sect was obliged to celebrate its devotions, to those superb temples, where the consecrated fans of infallibility, borne before the pope, still shew that even infallibility is no proof against heat.

The fan, likewise, makes a part of the ceremonies of the Greek church; and is placed in the hands of the deacon, on the day of his consecration, in allusion to his office of keeping off the flies from the priests, while they officiate. This must be a sinecure in Russia; but the form survives the want; and woe to the infidel, who, in that region of ice, would propose a *chaufferette*, to replace the fan established by the church and state, at some glorious and immortal epoch.

Fans came into England, with other eastern objects of use, ornament, or curiosity. The fan

with which Queen Elizabeth is said to have graciously tapped an Irish lord lieutenant, (Sir J. Perrot,) would knock down a modern courtier. In the time of Charles the Second a French fan was a fatal gift. That which saved the modesty of Madame de Genlis's Dianas, purchased too often the honour of the Maid of Honour of the English court. The Duchess of Portsmouth, of course, brought over her own fan from the Palais Royal; from which she was despatched by the Duchess of Orleans, to rule over the heart and councils of the king of England: and, above all, to secure the king's salvation, by enabling him to live and die "*ferme catholique*," which he did.* The zeal and the views are the same: the form only differs. Other times—other modes.

The fan, however, was not the great rampart thrown up before the citadel of English modesty, under the Stuarts. The modesty of those times had a strange habit of going to see plays so immodest, that it was deemed necessary to cover the face "*pour dissimuler son embarras*;" and the

* Charles the Second died in the arms of the Church and the Duchess of Portsmouth.—See DALRYMPLE.

mask was resorted to, while the fan was simply retained, then, and for a century afterwards, for the only and innocent purpose of

“ Giving coolness to the matchless dame—
To every other breast, a flame.”

The tactics and manœuvres, necessary for the operating of these double purposes, produced the well known “ exercise of the fan,” so delightfully detailed, for the benefit of posterity, in that treasure of a work, the Spectator.

At last, in the decadence of manners, (historically marked in the memoirs of a fan, and its philosophy, as clearly as in the decline and fall of empires,) this elegant little implement of the coquetry of our ancestresses fell to be an article of mere utility—returning, as all things must, to its origin.

Our mothers and aunts appeared, during summer, with a good housewife-like green fan, to keep off the sun: for “ *l'affaire du parasol*,” for which Louis the Fifteenth was obliged to issue a decree, had not yet travelled into Great Britain; and the fan of “ *ma tante Aurore*” was the only

fan known to our aunt Tabithas. French philosophy, and a total abandonment of the constitution of 1688, at length banished this instrument as an indispensable part of the toilette. The parasol was found more convenient; and the fan, only employed to “*cool the matchless dame*” after a walk through a quadrille, or a lounge through a waltz, was reduced to that fairy size to which Madame de Genlis gives the reproachful title of *éventail imperceptible*. “The history of fashions is not so frivolous as has been imagined; it is, in fact, the history of manners,”—and so far, *je suis d'accord*, with the venerable, but not very veracious, historian of the “*Fan*.”

NO ONE'S ENEMY BUT HIS OWN.

“No man’s enemy but his own” happens generally to be the enemy of every body with whom he is in relation. The leading quality that goes to make this character, is a reckless imprudence, and a selfish pursuit of selfish enjoyments, independent of all consequences. “No one’s enemy but his own” runs rapidly through his means; calls, in a friendly way, on his friends, for bonds, bail, and securities; involves his nearest kin; leaves his wife a beggar; and quarters his orphans upon the public; and, after having enjoyed himself to his last guinea, entails a life of dependance on his progeny, and dies in the odour of that ill-understood reputation of harmless folly, which is more injurious to society, than some positive crimes. The social chain is so nicely and delicately constructed, that not a link snaps, rusts, or refuses its proper play, without the shock being felt like an electric vibration to its utmost limits.

VULGARITY.

THERE is nothing so hopeless as vulgarity—genuine vulgarity, arising from presumption and want of tact, united to the peculiar demonstrative habits of humble life. The strongest illustration of this species of vulgarity will be found in Ireland, where the national vanity forces all qualities into evidence. It is often accompanied by the conscious possession of some moderate talent, or some serviceable qualification, which carries the possessor out of his natural orbit, into higher circles, where he is adopted either as an available agent, or an amusing ridicule. In this position, vulgarity comes out in its strongest relief; and if it be not utterly disgusting, by being excessively obtrusive, it is often very humorous and very absurd. This is the vulgarity which furnishes mystification to society, and character for novels; supplying the Lord Charleses with vastly good fun, and such writers as the authors of “The Absentee” and the

“O’Briens,” with their Sir Phelims and their Captain O’Mealys. Easy assurance; a presuming familiarity, on the slightest grounds, with persons of superior rank; obtrusiveness, without reference to time, place, or persons; a clipped but not mitigated brogue, gesticulation, and a sort of posture-master’s attitude; frequent reference to “honour,” and “credit;” the dropping of titles when speaking of the qualified, and an affected condescension when speaking to equals, are among the generic signs of the incorrigibly vulgar of that country, where it is the ambition of all to be supremely genteel.

In England, the classes and degrees of society are defined by such strong lines of demarcation, that there is less play given for pretension to exhibit its absurdities; and even the vulgarity of cockneyism is less striking and less humorous, than the vulgarity of the social *parvenus* of Irish circles. In either instance, confine the patient within the limits of his own proper and natural sphere, and the vulgarity that disgusts, or amuses when displaced, loses its sharpness, as engravers say,

for the true and abundant source of all vulgarity is pretension.

Nobody is struck by an apparent vulgarity in the smart young shopman, who officiates behind the counter of one of the great "*houses*" (formerly shops) in Waterloo Place or Oxford Street, and who, simply labouring in his vocation, is as much what he ought to be, as "*comme il faut*," as the duchess, who tosses over his crêpes, cachemirs, and merinos, as if the looms of France, Spain, and India were mounted and worked "solely for her use." But take this Dick, the apprentice of Grafton House, or of the Magazine of Fashion, in his opera hat, at a ball at the Crown and Anchor, or "playing the fine" at a "great to do" at Mrs. Mango's, and you have the delightful Magnus Apollo of Snow Hill,—the "sprightly young man" of the Miss Brancton's first floor.

Besides this highest and most dramatic order of vulgarity, in which temperament and circumstances alike combine, there is a sort of conventional vulgarity, found occasionally in all ranks and classes,

and which is only termed vulgarity, because it does not submit to be wound up and set, by the great regulator of fashion. This species of vulgarity, which is in fact no vulgarity at all, though it be a dereliction from the standard manner of a particular circle, is generally the result of early associations, and of great animal spirits overleaping the boundaries prescribed by cold, quiet, still-life *bon ton* ; for that style of manners which has become a doctrine, is but the result of a phlegmatic temperament, inherited with the old blood of ancient descent.

Pope, with a sort of physiological poetry, has applied the term “creep,” to the languid circulation of “ancient but ignoble blood.” To be what is called “*trop prononcé*,” (for the dogmas of modern fashion, like the old English laws, are all given in French) is a misprision of vulgarity, frequently detected even in the very highest classes ; and no coronet, however knobbed, can save its wearer from the imputation, if she is once convicted of the high crime and misdemeanour of being too “*démonstratif*” of her feelings, prepossessions, humours, or opinions.

I remember hearing one duchess say of another,

“ She is amusing, but she is insufferably vulgar.” Both their graces were equally influential at the head of their respective and particular circles: the more elegant duchess was by temperament, and by British aristocratic breeding, endowed “with all her sex’s softness,” and with all that quiet assumption of dignity, which “comes but by the aid of use.” The more *demonstrative* grace, with a highland temperament, and spirits bright and elevated as the region that produced them, was perpetually bounding over the lines of circumvallation drawn by the *bon ton* against the inroads of nature. Betrayed frequently into coarseness, she was still never vulgar—for assumption, and not pretension, was the failing of the clever, brilliant, but *trop prononcée* Duchess of G——

HUMAN PARROTS.

THERE are persons deficient in the stuff which makes intellect, just as there are individuals born without some particular sense. Incapable of originating ideas, because impenetrable to the impressions whence ideas come, they have memories instead of minds. They retain words: and, in giving them utterance, depend upon accident for the justice of their application.

One of these human parrots was present the other day, when Mr. C—— said, “Such an one cannot last; his physical force is quite gone.” A few days afterwards, the parrot, in quoting the observation, remarked, “C. says he cannot live much longer, for his physic is out.”

It is truly astonishing how little talent suffices to get on in the world. The instinctive cunning observable in children and animals, is equal to the wants and desires of the individual; and the un-

ideal babble and animal vivacity of the parrot, pass for information and agreeableness: while genius and feeling, obstructed at every step by dulness and prejudice, or revolted at the meanness and littleness which thwart them, stop short in the first stage of their route, and recoiling on themselves, too often live unknown and unbenefited by the world they enlighten and amuse.

CATS.

IN old family portraits, the ladies are painted with birds or animals as the accessories of the picture. Such playthings were, in fact, the great resources of our female ancestors, whose uneducated minds, and unsocial position (when there were neither books nor assemblies) threw them upon dogs, monkeys, parrots, and cats, as a refuge from *ennui*. Fondness for animals arises out of the idleness of barbarism, as the tolerance of the various nuisances they occasion does from its

coarseness. It is not, however, the less true, that the playful kitten, with its pretty little tigerish gambles, is infinitely more amusing than half the people one is obliged to live with in the world.

I have observed, that all domestic animals are more amiable and intelligent on the continent, than with us: it may be they are better treated; for nothing tames like kindness. The fine breed of Angola cats, so common in the South of Italy, is a proof of the assertion; they are much caressed and attended to, and are as intelligent and as attachable as dogs. The first day we had the honour of dining at the palace of the Archbishop of Taranto, at Naples, he said to me, "You must pardon my passion for cats (*la mia passione gattesca*), but I never exclude them from my dining-room, and you will find they make excellent company."

Between the first and second course, the door opened, and several enormously large and beautiful cats were introduced, by the names of Pantalone, Desdemona, Otello, and other dramatic *cognomina*. They took their places on chairs near the table, and were as silent, as quiet, as motionless and as well behaved, as the most *bon-ton*

table in London could require. On the bishop requesting one of the chaplains to help the Signora Desdemona to something, the butler stepped up to his lordship and observed, "Desdemona will prefer waiting for the roasts." After dinner they were sent to walk on the terrace, and I had the honour of assisting at their *coucher*, for which a number of comfortable cushions were prepared in the bishop's dressing-room. The Archbishop of Taranto, so well known through Italy as the author of many clever works, has also produced one on cats, full of ingenuity and pleasantry.

On my return from Naples, and during our second happy residence in Milan (the remembrance of which is now clouded and embittered by the horrible fate of those superior beings, who were the cause of that return and that residence), I happened to mention my observation on the sensible character of the animals of the south of Italy, and of the *douceur* and intelligence of the archbishop's beautiful Desdemona; when the young and gifted author of "Francesca da Rimini" (who now lies buried in his living tomb—an Austrian *carcere duro*), related to me the story of a

“*passione gattesca*,” which had recently occurred in a neighbouring village, perfectly illustrative of my hypothesis—here it is:—

“*Il Gatto del Cimitero.*”

THE CAT OF THE CEMETERY.

A BEAUTIFUL peasant girl of the village of Monte-orsano, in the Brianza, had obtained a sort of melancholy celebrity by an infliction, which frequently struck her down to the earth, in the midst of the village festival, or church ceremony, where her beauty and piety were the boast and the edification of her village friends. Every physician in Lombardy, every saint in the calendar, had been applied to, on behalf of *Clementina*; and vows and offerings had been made in vain, to cure, what was incurable, a confirmed epilepsy. If the saints, however, were negligent, *Clementina* had one friend, whose vigilance never slumbered. It was her cat; which not only shared her bed and her *polenta*, but followed her in her walks and devotions, from the vineyard to the altar.

The first time that *Mina* saw her young mistress

fall in a fit, and wound herself against a tomb in the village cemetery, she exhibited the most extraordinary emotion. She soon acquired the habit, from a frequent recurrence of the infirmity, of watching its approach ; and at last seemed to have obtained such a knowledge of the change of countenance and colour, which preceded the attack, that she was wont, on the first symptom, to run to the parents of Clementina, and, by dragging their clothes, scratching at their persons, or mewing in the most melancholy manner, (“ *Miagolando in tuono mesto ed affannoso,*”) she succeeded in awakening their attention, and trotted out before them, mewing them on to the spot, where her young mistress lay lifeless. Mina at last obtained such confidence for her warnings, that, on the first cry of the faithful cat, the friends of Clementina flew to her assistance before she incurred any injury from her sudden fall.

At fifteen, the malady of the beautiful Clementina brought her to the tomb. Her cat walked after her bier, on which she was exposed, (as is the custom in Italy), and covered with flowers. During the funeral service, she sat at the head of the bier, gazing with an intent look on the lifeless features

of her young mistress; and when the grave was filling, she made a vain endeavour to jump in, but was withheld by the bystanders, who carried home this chief mourner after the melancholy ceremony. Mina, however, was seen the next morning stretched upon the new made grave, which she continued to visit daily, until she visited it for the last time, a few months after her friend's death; when she was found dead upon the green mound that covered her remains.

The celebrity of the "*Gatto del Cimitero*," has not yet passed away from the village of Monte-orfano. I dedicate this little history of the faithful *Mina*, to my young friend *Ina*; whose "*passione gattesca*," entitles her to the distinction. Kindness to animals is but a form of sensibility, and in youth is always the harbinger of higher and deeper-seated feelings. It should not be confounded with the misplaced instinct of maternity in childless old maids, or the capricious fondness of adults for the brute creation, which is unaccompanied by any touch of kindness for their biped dependants, or any manifestation of sympathy for human misfortune.

TRADES, PROFESSIONS AND SCIENCES.

TRADES, professions, manufactures, even the sciences, the divine sciences themselves, come in and go out of fashion with times and circumstances ; and to talk of permanency, of stopping short at particular epochs and eras (always so sacred with dullness and ignorance), is to speak a language utterly inapplicable to truth, nature, and society. Many of the trades which were in vogue so recently as the time of the two first Georges, are passed and gone. Fifty years ago, London and Paris abounded with fan painters. Some of the most noted artists among the contemporaries of Sir Joshua Reynolds began life in this department of their profession ; and they made more money by sprawling shepherdesses in bell-hoops, upon banks of roses, attended by squinting shepherds with bag-wigs and bouquets, than some scores of young painters can now acquire by copying the works of Titian, or catching the beauties of Raphael. Then there

was the coach-pannel painter, belonging to times when the visiting chariot of a lady of fashion bore her device and cognizance on her carriage, like the knight of old on his shield and target: when the loves and the graces, with turtles, trophies, and wreaths of roses, were sported in the park and the ring, to the admiration of the pedestrian multitude, and the substantial comfort of the unambitious and unknown artist.

I remember having seen one of these antiquated teams of taste of the good old times, creeping along a cross road in Picardy, on my first visit to France. How different from a modern “drag” of dash, shaped and coloured like a mail coach, as strong and as ungainly, and decorated with pointers and race-horses! It enshrined a dowager anti-revolutionary beauty, much more freshly painted than her *voiture coupée*, and almost in as many colours. She bore in her hand a fan *to match*, that was an historical picture of the court of Louis the XVth; and her hair was dressed with a *tête*, surmounted by a *petite cornette*, *qui ne laissait rien à désirer*, in the eyes of the true virtuoso of highly preserved antiquities. The carriage, the fan, the *coiffure*, were all alike

the production of arts long now gone by. Oh ! how I should have liked to seize upon the whole set-out, and place it under a glass case !

I have a family on the list of my visiting book, scarcely less curious in their way, than these Picardy relics ; fit for the cabinet, and worthy to be preserved as dried specimens of a phasis of society which history will never record.

The painted carriage was unknown in the time of Henry the IVth of France, who tells Sully that he cannot visit him on a certain occasion, because his wife had “ *mon carrosse*,” the only carriage belonging to the royal establishment. The fashion of splendidly decorating coaches, began in the middle of Louis the XIVth’s reign, and it ended, in England, in the reign of George the Ist. The most gorgeous carriage on record, was that which the ingenious sycophancy of Bernini painted for Christina of Sweden, on the occasion of her visit to Pope Alexander the VIIth, when she went to Rome, to make a public abjuration of Lutheranism. “ She was received,” says a curious old work I picked up on a stall in the Piazza Navona in Rome, “ with unspeakable applause ;” and among other “ *regali*”

presented her by the Pope, were a coach, a litter, a sedan chair, and a hackney. The description of these articles is curious, and belongs to times and trades now no more.*

Some traces of the expense and magnificence of coach decorations still remain in the state carriage of the Lord Mayor of London, which has survived many more important monuments of the taste and the judgment of our ancestors. Whether the painting of pictures on coach panels was driven out by heraldic pride, or fell merely by the caprice of fashion, I cannot say. It is most probable that the custom was itself an innovation upon armorial bearings, to which it in turn gave place. In the early period of the revolution, when the emblazoning of arms was forbidden, some of the bolder members replaced their escutcheon on their carriages, by the

* “Era la carrozza tutta d’argento con statue, figurine intaglio et imprese misteriose, d’invenzione del Cavalier Bernini, con la fodera e le coperte di velluti di color celeste, tirata da sei corsieri leardi; coi finimenti dello stesso drappo; come pure del medesimo erano adornati i cocchieri, la lettica, e la sedia, e le coperte dei muli e della Chinaea, il tutto tempestuti di brocche massiccie d’argento e ornato da diversi lavori superbi dello stesso metallo.”—*Platina Vite de’ Pont.*

representation of the sun behind a cloud, with the motto—" *ça reparoîtra.*"

Almost in our times, great has been the downfall of wig-makers, who, for more than a century, engrossed so large a portion of the public money. In the time of Queen Anne, thirty guineas was the price of a full fledged perriwig, an enormous sum for those days. As the beaux laid down false hair, the women seem to have adopted its use. Under the names of systems and *têtes*, these filthy appendages maintained their ground in Ireland to a late period. The last "system, *tête*, and peruke-maker," I saw, was in my childhood, in Connaught, and so I handed him over to the Miss Mac Taafs, for their city of Craiggellan, where he figures in the person of Gil-Duff O'Kirwan. The "system" was a high cushion of horse-hair. I saw it worn by an itinerant schoolmistress, brought into my father's house, to teach me my letters, and to work a sampler, when I was about four years old. Her figure and system got such a hold of my imagination, that, "not on the book my eyes were fixed, but her." "That fairy form," (which was six feet high,) "I have ne'er forgot"—

The system was a most complicated affair. Men served an apprenticeship to learn its architecture. The cushion was but a scaffolding, on which the superstructure was supported, which rose by the foot ; while curls, “ *en canon*,” massy as rolling stones, were piled on each other, till they made “ Ossa like a wart.”

These adscititious monstrosities were beginning to disappear, when Mr. Pitt, by the hair-powder tax, gave a death blow to the trade of hair-dressing. It has been said, I know not with what truth, that the idea of this tax originated with Lewis the actor, and that he was handsomely rewarded for the invention. At this period, the Brutus head, and the close-cropped *tête à la victime*, were adopted as tests of republicanism in France ; as the round head was made a mark of covenantism in the English revolution ; and this fashion aided and abetted the destruction of the loquacious tribe of tale-bearers.

It is one of the blessed effects of the diffusion of knowledge, to render men less dependent on others ; and society seems to have rejoiced in its emancipation from the tyranny of hair-dressing.

Formerly the barber's knock was as well known, and as punctual as the postman's. His important visage, sagacious look, and his bag of apparatus, belonged as much to the objects of daily vision, as the place in which he was received. There, for one mortal hour at least, and that at the most precious and active period of the day, sat the victim of fashion with its minister, bound tightly up in a white cloth, like a baby in swaddling-clothes, sometimes pulled by the nose, sometimes scored on the cheek, and often in danger of an unlucky cut across the throat;—then again, smoked and smothered with the vapours reeking from the curling iron, which dragged up his hair by the roots; while his drawn-in breath, clenched hands, closed lips, and puffed cheeks, spoke all the torture of his voluntary suffocation. The whole sad scene terminated in a dense cloud of musty powder, discharged from the notable puffing machine into every exposed orifice, filling the ears, ascending the nostrils, and blinding the eyes of the sufferer. Yet the wisdom of our ancestors looked upon this daily martyrdom and perpetual disfiguration as indispensable to the appearance of a gentleman.

Even tradesmen gave up their time and persons to this voluntary immolation ; and assisted to people the good old times with monsters, and to support trades, which, making no return, diverted industry from more profitable channels.

Franklin, when ambassador to France during the American war, frequently expressed his regret that the *corps de friseurs* was not placed at his disposition, to fight the English ; and that the money expended on hair-powder was not devoted to powder of more inflammable and explosive properties. The use of hair-powder, however, encouraged the landed interest,—a saving virtue ; and if it raised the price of bread, there was, as the French king has it, the charity of the nation to supply the deficiencies of the poor—a right royal specimen of political economy.

Hair-dressing, moreover, had its indirect advantages, by encouraging literary propensities ; many worthy persons took the opportunity of lining the inside of their heads, while the barber decorated its outward parts, who would never otherwise have found leisure for “improving the mind.” In those days, a play-book or a pamphlet was sure to be

whitened, in every third page, by the contents of the power-puff. Hairdressers were also serviceable to their species, by maintaining and diffusing a taste for anecdote. Even ministers of state were occasionally indebted to the *coiffeur* for their principal knowledge of human nature, and for the better part of their wit.

The ministerial influence of barbers has ever been considerable. The grand sultan's barber is, to this day, the pivot of affairs, the focus of revolutions, the ladder of rising fortunes, and the Tarpeian rock of functionaries on the wane. Under Louis the Fourteenth, the *coiffeurs*, male and female, were important personages; and they figure largely in the memoirs of that day. Martin la Vienne, and Mademoiselle la Borde, have become historical characters, as much as the heroes and beauties they dressed; and the "*coiffure à la paysanne*," and "*les boucles de Montgobert*," form epochs in the history of nations. Under the regency, an "*Encyclopédie Perruquière*" appeared, illustrating the mysteries of the craft by one hundred and twenty engravings of different orders of *perruques*, which gave the idea, some years after-

wards, of a work on the same plan, by *Le Sieur le Gros, cōiffeur* to the court of Louis the Fifteenth. The solemn importance attached to this volume by its author, who announced it to the great Catherine of Russia, is an admirable satire on the frivolity of the day; the title was “*Livre d’Estampes de l’Art de la Coiffure des Dames Françaises, gravés sur les dessins originaux d’après mes accommodages, avec le Traité en abrégé d’entretenir et de conserver les Cheveux naturels.*”^{*}—And yet Madame de Genlis says, “*Il y a quarante-cinq ans que les femmes auroient trouver de l’indécence à se faire coiffer par des hommes.*”[†] M. Le Gros gave a still further dignity to the art, by opening an academy, which he divided into the same number of classes as the academy of sciences at Paris; and actually furnished it with thirty models, that were not exactly “*d’après l’antique.*”

Under Louis the Sixteenth, the hair-dressers are said to have been accompanied by *les physiogno-*

^{*} A book of engravings of the art of hair-dressing for the ladies of France, after my own designs, with an abridged treatise on the conservation of the natural hair.

[†] “Five and forty years ago, the women would have thought it indecent to have their hair dressed by men.”

mistes, who pronounced on the style to be adopted on each head, according to the nature of the countenance. One of these Lavaters of the toilet entering, with his employer, into the dressing-room of a new patient, fresh arrived from England, threw him into no small consternation by the earnestness of his scrutinizing regard. Full of John Bullish notions, of French tyranny, *lettres de cachet*, and, of course, of his own importance in the eyes of the government, the Englishman saw nothing in the penetrating looks of the artist, but *espionnage* and “*à cul de basse fosse* :”—he was actually preparing for a knock-down blow, and a run, when the solemn figure relieved him from his fright, and left the room, exclaiming, “*Figure de marron, marronnez Monsieur*.”

The revolution came, and kings and *coiffeurs* fell together.—Nature vindicated her rights—hair-dressers lost theirs—and beauty and purity resumed their privileges under the name of Greek costume.

The enameller was also, in former times, a profession of much profit and occupation: not such enamellers as the Bones and Bates of the present

day, nor as the Petitots of the past ; but good tradesman-like artists, who kept shops well stored with enamelled snuff, patch, and rouge boxes, and every article of domestic usage, to which they could apply their art. Who, that ever rummaged her mother's drawers, and found the watch-chains of her grandmother, ponderous as jack-chains, and fastened with hooks massy as flesh-forks, does not remember the enamelled trinkets suspended from it—eggs, anchors, bird-cages, and watch-boxes, with bottles for bergamotte, and beetles filled with thieves' vinegar, (the *eau de cypre*, and the *mille-fleurs* of the *belles* of the last century, who always smelled like a pot of pomatum, or a pickled cucumber) ?—the least prized of the senses has its march of intellect, *tout comme un autre*, and the strength of perfumes is no bad indication of the state of society.

But, alas, for the sciences ! that they too should “ bear but the perfume and suppliance of a moment ;” and be brought in and out of fashion, like a *beret* of Herbault, or a *robe* of Victorine. Yet so it is, and was, and ever will be, as the wants and

exigencies of society have occasion for the aid of different pursuits.

Towards the end of the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, and the beginning of that of Louis the Fifteenth, (including the regency,) astronomy, taking the place of polemics, raged like an epidemic. Men, women, and children, leaving this world to take care of itself, got into "other and better worlds;" and wits, lost on earth, were all to be found, like Orlando's, in the moon. Women's eyes were no longer the only lights that helped poets to similes. Celestial bodies succeeded to terrestrial; Love, no longer blind, never appeared without a telescope; rendezvous were given in *bosquets* and on terraces, to gaze on the "chaste cold moon;" hearts and planets disappeared together; and ladies were so intently engaged in studying the principles of Newton, that they forgot their own; and gave practical demonstration that, in going astray, women's "stars are more in fault than they."

But when Newton had ceased to act upon the imagination, by fresh discoveries of striking and

impressive import, the astronomers became *mauvais ton* ; and the Parisian women of fashion took to pet geometers, as the *pendants* for their pet monkeys. D'Alembert became the Coryphæus of the French boudoirs ; and the Tencins, and the Du Deffands fought for the possession of the least gallant man and the first geometrician of his age ; who, in his turn, made way for chemistry and Lavoisier.

The English, who have been called a nation of shopkeepers, and who mingle trade even with their love of science, took to chemistry with an enthusiasm proportioned to its utility in the arts ; much in the same way as the kings and nobles of a former age had brought alchemy into vogue, as an instrument of their avarice. Although natural history entered the lists with its experimental rival, and canvassed for vogue in the library of Sir Joseph Banks, oxygen and hydrogen carried the field ; and Sir Humphry Davy, with his class of aristocratic beauties in the west, was as much revered as the “*premier baron de la Judée*” is in the east.

Chemistry, however, has had its day ; and the Ricardos and Malthuses have succeeded, to turn the

heads of those, whom nature intended only to turn the heads of others—to be succeeded in the next generation by—God knows what. In France, the once popular electricity of Franklin, and the cognate study of the magnet, have given birth to the reigning folly of Mesmerism; and in England, the popular labours of the Hunters have terminated in the current vogue of craniology. Who can answer for it, that the necessities of no-popery may not revive the witchcraft of King James, and call to its aid the penal *dicta* of some new Matthew Hale, for the better putting down of dangerous papists?

Even the divine arts, which are of all ages, have experienced the full versatility of human affairs. Protestantism made war upon the successors of the Raphaels; and great pictures went out, with great cathedrals and great palaces. Pitt dealt a severe back-handed blow to engraving; while wealth, snugness, and personal vanity, combined to give currency to portraits of gentlemen and ladies. Now, we have lithography opening a new career to genius and industry; and every day teems with fresh discoveries, all, more or less, influencing the destiny of the imitative arts.

Neither are the learned professions built upon a more solid foundation. Theology, notwithstanding the fashionable sanctity, is obsolete; law is at a considerable discount, and physicians are set on one side, to give place for the triumphal car of surgery. The fact is, that society, like nature, bent on its own great purposes, steadily pursues the course of its interests; and it sustains, for the moment, those pursuits, and those only, for which it has an immediate and pressing occasion. It is in vain that we look for the architectural skill which raised the ponderous temples of Egypt, or the more graceful, but less substantial, edifices of Greece. Mortar and Roman cement have substituted the Nashes and the Wyatvilles, for the *protégés* of the Ptolemys and Pericles; and the reign of George the Fourth cannot, in physical possibility, become the age of Augustus. The house of brick, will never become the house of marble.

MR. OWEN'S TUNIC.

TALKING the other day of small rooms and glaring lights, where all is in evidence, I made them my excuse for indulging in a tendency to make up my coterie of pleasant men and pretty women, and to keep out the twaddles of both sexes, for which I am much abused. It is not long since a philosophical friend of mine, one always deeply occupied in promoting the highest and best interests of society, by perfecting science in its most sublime and useful directions, called on me, and found me most frivolously, but earnestly, employed in filling up cards for a very small party. "I am come," he said, "to ask a favour." I started: for, delighted as at all times I am to improve my society by enlisting him amongst its members, I was yet terribly afraid he was going to ask leave to bring with him some of those young disciples, who flock to his class from all parts of Europe, but who (un-

less one could *ticket* them) do not answer quite so well for a fashionable party, as for a laboratory or a dissecting room. I was really, therefore, never more relieved, than when I found it was not a card for my *soirée* he wanted, but only my head, literally and truly my head;—that is, be it understood, when the commodity should no longer be of use to its owner. I readily gave him a *post-obit* on the only productive estate I ever possessed, delighted to save my “at home” even at so capital an expense.

It would, however, be a mistake, to accuse me of aristocratical leanings with respect to society. Something I must have—worth, wit, rank, fashion, beauty, notoriety, or an old friend. I will take even a diamond necklace, or an hussar suit of regimentals, value one hundred pounds, with, or without the wearer: but I do not want what musical cognoscenti call “*perruque* ;” because I have no spare space to fill up, no corners to cram, like people who have large houses.

A propos to an untenanted uniform and an unappropriated necklace—by way of lion, I once hung up on the divisions of my bookcase a little tunic ;

and it made the *frais* of my party, by giving rise to an infinity of fun, and some philosophical, though humorous, conversation. On the previous morning, the most benevolent, amiable, and sanguine of all philanthropists called on me, with a countenance full of some new scheme of beneficence and utility. It was Mr. Owen, of New Lanark, whose visits are always welcome in Kildare-street, though so "few and far between."

As soon as we had sunk into our arm-chairs, and put our feet on the fender, and before we had got on the usual topics of parallelograms and perfectibility, New Lanark and a new social system, he began,

"My dear Lady Morgan, you are to have a party to-night."

"To be sure, my dear Mr. Owen, and one made expressly for yourself. You are my lion: I hope you don't mean to jilt me."

"By no means; but I have brought you a better lion than I could prove."

"I doubt that; but who is he? where is he?"

"In my pocket."

"You don't say so: is it alive?"

“ Here it is,” said Mr. Owen, smiling ; and drawing forth a little parcel, he unfolded and held up a canvas tunic, or chemise, trimmed with red tape.

“ I want you,” he added, “ to assist me in bringing into fashion this true costume of nature’s dictation, the only one that man should wear.”

“ But woman, my dear Mr. Owen ?”

“ Or woman either, my dear Lady.”

“ Consider, Mr. Owen, the climate !”

“ Your face does not suffer from it.”

“ But then again, the decencies ?”

“ The *decencies*, as you call them, Lady M —, are conventional—they were not thought of some years ago, when you were all dressed in the adhesive draperies of antiquity, like that beautiful group on your chimney-piece. You see there the children of Niobe wore no more voluminous garments than my tunic ;—that lovely child, for instance, which Niobe is endeavouring to save from the shafts of Apollo. And yet none of your fine gentlemen or ladies are shocked by the definition of forms, which have ever been the inspiration of

art. I assure you I have already got several ladies to try this tunic on—”

“ Oh ! Mr. Owen !!! ”

“ On their little *boys*, Lady Morgan ; and if I could only induce you to try it—”

“ Me, my dear Mr. Owen ! You surely cannot suppose—”

“ I don't ask you to *wear* it, Lady M—— : all I beg for the present, is, that you will give it a trial, by showing it off at your party to-night—recommend it, puff it off ! ”

Quitte pour la peur, I promised to do so, to the utmost of my appraising abilities ; and so we suspended the little chemise from the centre of my bookcase, under a bust of the Apollo.

“ There ! ” said Mr. Owen, looking rapturously at the little model dress of future perfectibility, “ there it is worthily placed ! Such were the free vestments, that, leaving the limbs of the Greek athlete unrestrained, produced those noble forms, which supplied models for the Apollo of Belvedere.”

“ It is certainly placed to great advantage, Mr.

Owen," I replied with a sigh, " but it gives my pretty library very much the look of Rag-fair, or a back parlour in Monmouth-street."

" My dear Madam," he replied, emphatically, " where the human race is to be benefitted, no sacrifice is too great." And this sentiment, which is the governing principle of Mr. Owen's life, may serve for his epigraph.

The little tunic, however, had a great success, and merited the well-known eulogium of Tam O'Shanter to a similar garment—

" Weil loup'd, cutty sark."

ODD CONJUNCTIONS.

THE accidents and incidents of travelling sometimes produce very odd conjunctions. When I arrived in Rome, I was in all the first bloom of proscription, brought upon me by my work on France, "*Femme à pendre, livre à brûler*;" and my introduction to the Buonaparte family, set the seal on my transgression in the eyes of their deputed

persecutor, the Comte de Blacas, ambassador of France. Even the secretary's secretary of the representative of his most Christian Majesty, was afraid to turn his diplomatic eyes to the side of the room where I stood, lest he should happen to *se compromettre* in a furtive glance. On the occasion of one of the many splendid parties given by the Countess of C——, by which the hospitality of Ireland was maintained in the ancient capital of the Cæsars, his Excellency the Count de Blacas and myself got so wedged together in the crush at the drawing-room door, that the Italian groom of the chambers, in the breathless haste of his rapid annunciation, cried out *de haute voix*, “*Son Excellence l'Ambassadeur de France, et Lady Morgan.*” “Holy St. Francis! what a *tête-à-tête* was there!” The whole room was in a titter.

PRINCESS BORGHESE.

I WAS seated at breakfast one bright Roman-winter morning with the Princess Borghese, at her villa Paolina, near the Porta Pia, and within view of the ruins of the Prætorian barracks, when letters from the post were brought in. The Princess turned to the Chevalier ——, her agent and chamberlain, and requested him to read and answer one of them immediately; adding, “You know precisely what I ought to say, and will say it better than I can.”—“The Chevalier,” I said, as he retreated to an adjoining room, “appears to be an excellent person. It must be a great advantage, in your Highness’s present position, to have so tried an adherent of your family, to assist you with his experience and advice.”

“*Oui*,” she replied, “*c’est l’homme du monde le plus respectable. C’étoit le Chancelier pour mon*

*Duché, car mon frère ne m'a pas donné de Royaume."**

What a trait ! How super-exquisite ; but oh ! for the careless *nonchalante* air with which in the intervals of two sips of chocolate, " my brother did not give me a kingdom," was uttered !

" Do this, and this,
Take in that kingdom, and enfranchise that."

I give this dialogue, exactly as it was uttered. A veracious recital of the most ordinary conversation, goes beyond the effort of fiction ; and there is nothing in the doctrine of possibilities, however extravagant, which is not equalled or surpassed by fact.

* " Yes, he is the most excellent person in the world. He was the chancellor of my duchy ; for my brother did not give me a kingdom."

THE COUNSELLOR.

I WAS talking yesterday to a gentleman of the birth, parentage, and education, of Mr. Canning; all of which have been for ever misrepresented by the political enemies of that eminent man. "He was the grandson," said my informant, "of the well known Counsellor Canning of Garva, who, as an Irishman, of ancient birth, large possessions, and as a member of the Irish legislature, was a person of the very highest consideration."

"Then why do you call him counsellor, as a title of distinction?"

"Because in Counsellor Canning's day, it was a distinction. A papist might have a noble descent, a large property, and an historical name, but he could not be a counsellor."

Whatever marked the distinctive privileges of the Protestant ascendancy, was a grade in itself, a dignity guarded by the laws of the land,

and an assurance of personal gentility. Up to the middle of the last century, all the liberal professions were closed against the Catholic gentry of Ireland; but it was a dignity to belong to the bar, even among protestants; for the candidate for its honours was obliged to study in London, which at that time was an affair of no inconsiderable enterprize and effort. The uncertain sea voyage, and long land journey, were attended with a heavy expense, some risk, and considerable labour. .Wales being then inaccessible to carriages, that part of the journey was made on hired horses; and not less than three weeks were occasionally passed in the transit from Dublin to London. To be a counsellor, therefore, was in itself the mark of a certain considerable wealth and respectability.

“Counsellor,” is still prefixed as a title of distinction by the common people, and by all the second-rate Catholics, to the names of barristers; and even the feudal cognomen of “*the O’Connell*” loses nothing by the professional dignity of counsellor, which the Kerry clients of that gentleman, the ex-subjects of his dynasty, never fail to give him.

A short time before the death of Grattan, “ our husband and ourself ” drove from the house of our old friend General C——, to pay a visit at Tena-hinch. We had taken a wrong road, within a mile or two of that beautiful spot ; and we stopped to inquire our way of an old woman, who sat spinning at a cabin door. “ Pray, which is the road to Mr. Grattan’s ? ”

“ Misther Grattan ! Och, sorrow know myself knows, no, in troth, Mar’m.”

“ What ! not know where Tenahinch is ? ”

“ Tinnyhinch, agraph ! Och, it’s the counsellor’s yez are looking for ; well, turn here, just to the right, and any body will tell yez where the counsellor’s is ; just a stone’s throw from the Dargle. Sorrow one in the country but knows the counsellor’s.”

The counsellor, then, was the distinctive epithet by which the poor neighbours of Tenahinch best knew “ the father of his country.” It was the title of his ascendancy ; and power is always uppermost in the Irish mind.

How deeply has the iron of oppression entered into the soul of the Irish nation, and how much

has a long misrule deteriorated the national intellect ; substituting the conventional for the true, and rendering moral dignity and honesty of conduct almost physically impossible. Aristides himself, to say nothing of St. Anthony, could scarcely resist the temptations to corruption which arise from a divided population, and which are unknown in the worst governments of the continent. The protestant ascendancy, from the peer to the coal porter, form the true aristocracy of the land, and all else are serfs. The protestants are in Ireland, what the Normans were in England ; only they have not seen the policy of a social fusion, which the more genial temperament of the French conquerors submitted to, in their intercourse with the Saxons. Oh ! with how many warm Irish hearts and ardent Irish spirits I began life, who have since yielded to the baneful influence of this state of things, and cooled down to a more prudent consideration of their country's wrongs, in relation to their own private interests. Yielding to a paltry and ephemeral ambition, they have looked down from the height of their official dignities upon the romance of patriotism, and condemned the expression of feel-

ings, which it was once their pride to avow. How many who once shared such illusions, have afterwards shunned my sight, lest they should involve their interests in the proscription of one who loved their country, "not wisely but too well." This is one of the severest penalties of life: death itself inflicts none so bitter. The penalties of nature bring their solace in their necessity: but what consoles for the terrible conviction of the frailty, and falling off from principle, of genius and sensibility; for perceiving, ere half our course is run, or, while we are maintaining ourselves a direct course, "steering right onward,"

"Each wave that we danced on at morning, glide from us,
And leave us at eve on the bleak shore alone."

RIDICULE.

“ Yes, I am proud—I must be proud to see
Men, not afraid of God, afraid of me.”

I ENVY Pope the burst of honest triumph that produced these lines !

How long was he lashed, tortured, reviled, calumniated, and misrepresented in character, feeling, religion, person, and in all his ties and all his affections, before the author of *Windsor Forest* and the *Universal Prayer* produced his *Satires* and his *Dunciad* ! Ridicule is an arm furnished by nature to wit, to defend it against the envy, hatred, and malice of vain, pretending, mediocrity ; and the severity of its blows, has no doubt mainly contributed to the outcry against its legitimacy in the warfare of opinion. Dulness commenced its denunciation, and self-interest set the seal of reprobation upon it, by rendering it penal.

The validity of the legal objection against ridicule, seems to me wholly untenable ; being

founded on one of those "subterfuges," in which Lord Kames tells us, that "lawyers delight." The assumption that ridicule is no test of truth, has been received without examination, principally on account of its application to the detection of political and religious error. Notwithstanding the universal dislike to be shewn up, no one has dared directly to question the morality of satire as a corrective of manners, or to object to the poet's magnificent boast of

" Safe from the bar, the pulpit, and the throne.
Yet touched and shamed by ridicule alone."

In criticism also, ridicule is allowed, notwithstanding the supposed proximity of the sublime to the ridiculous. Even the murderous parody of "Oh ! Jemmy Thomson, Jemmy Thomson, oh !" has escaped the imputation of injustice, and of leading to false conclusions, on the merit of the original. But above all, a great deal of the logic of Euclid consists in the *reductio ad absurdum*, which differs from the ridiculous, only because there is nothing very humorous in the disparity

discoverable in a man's notions concerning angles and lines.

In strictness of speech, there is no test of truth, save the evidence of the senses; but whatever tends to bring our conceptions in comparison with realities, may be so called; and that ridicule may be so applied to this purpose is indisputable. It is indeed the especial merit of ridicule, that it addresses itself to the senses, or at least to those ideas which are the most closely connected with sensitive impressions. The ridicule of persons is purely demonstrative. It is an enumeration of accidents and qualities, more or less exaggerated for the sake of humorous effect, but, for the rest, substantially true, or believed to be so: otherwise the ridicule fails. To tax a man with absurdities of which he is not guilty, is not ridicule, but calumny. Ridicule of opinions can only consist in such a juxta-position of ideas, as makes their disparity ludicrously self-evident. That which is consistent and true, cannot be ridiculed.

Ridicule derives its efficacy from the responsive sympathies of the audience addressed. The ridicule of unknown persons excites no emotion. The

ridicule of a known person, for qualities which he notoriously does not possess, is equally impotent. When Hone represented the British constitution by an inverted pyramid, resting on the crown at its apex, and supported by bayonets, the sensible image of instability he presented, found a prompt reflection in the public mind. He advanced, however, no novel statement. If a conviction had not pre-existed in public opinion of "something rotten in the state of Denmark," his humour would not have told. Had he supported the tottering edifice with a printing press, instead of a bayonet, the misrepresentation would have been rejected with scorn.

Ridicule stands precisely on the same ground as graver arguments, being either the statement of a fact, or an inference drawn from one; and it is liable to the same abuses, and no more. Nothing is more common than for ridicule to address itself to vulgar prejudices; but what is there singular in this? Aristophanes (it is said) assisted in forwarding the judicial murder of Socrates, by personifying in his drama the false notions which were current in Athens respecting that philosopher. But

Melytus and Anitus did precisely the same thing, and were equally successful through the employment of grave discussion; yet no one dreams of proscribing rhetoric and logic, because they were thus employed to make the worse appear the better cause. The common villainy in both cases was the falsehood of the matter objected. Had Socrates really spent his time in the pursuit of childish subtleties, the flea's leap would have been no more than a fair exaggeration, as illustrative as it was pleasant. Just so, had he really corrupted the youth of the city, the sober, serious invective of his public accusers would have been equitable: the fault, in both instances, was not in the form, but in the *fond*.

There is, however, this essential difference in favour of ridicule, that the graver lie might be the entire fabrication of the accuser, and yet produce its effect; whereas the efficacy of the satire depends altogether on the pre-existing prejudices of the public, which it only illustrates. Ridicule, it is true, may lead to error, by the misapplication of acknowledged truths; as when trifling absurdities are employed to render virtue contemptible. A bishop's

wig is no ornament to the “human face divine,” but it would be eminently unfair to conjure up the ridiculous image, in mockery of the pious individual who may be compelled to adopt the costume; still more unjust would it be, if an inference were drawn against the religious system which flourishes beneath the shadow of that hairy portent. Such false inductions are not, however, less familiar to the most serious argumentations; and they are then, by so much the more dangerous, as the bad reasoning is less obvious to detection.

The general rejection of ridicule in dispute, rests upon the most flimsy of sophisms—the argument from abuse to use. But there are many persons who direct their objections against it in its application to religious subjects, on account of the weight and dignity of the theme.* This is a frank begging of the question. Dugald Stewart, in speaking of the Provincial Letters of Pascal, observes, that there are some truths in which ridicule is more

* Disputes on religion are, after all, but disputes upon men’s ideas concerning supernatural objects; and to ridicule what is incongruous in thought, is by no means to ridicule the divine Author of all things—that is impossible.

powerful and convincing than reason. “ ‘The mischievous absurdities,’” he says, “ ‘which it was Pascal’s aim to correct, scarcely admitted the gravity of logical discussion, requiring only the extirpation or the prevention of those early prejudices which choke the growth of common sense and conscience.’”† Having, in his quality of a good protestant, a previous conviction or prejudice that the system of the Jesuits was false, Stewart readily admitted that the use of ridicule against it is fair. He would likewise have allowed, in all probability, a joke against Mahomet’s pigeon, or the miracle of his suspended coffin ; but he would not, I suspect, have approved of the ludicrous exaggeration of Voltaire’s drama on David, or have suffered it to pass muster as a proof of the disparity between the facts of that king’s life and his pretensions to the character of the man after God’s own heart. Certain I am, my Lord Chief Justice would not let such a work go unpunished. The ideas illustrated in this sarcastic attack, are of the commonest order of moral conceptions; and Voltaire might have thought himself

† First dissertation to the Supplement of the Encyclopædia.

as much justified as Pascal, in “extirpating a prejudice which scarcely required the gravity of logical discussion,” by a ridiculous travestie: the offence then, if offence there be, lies in the mind of the judge, and in his conviction as to what is, or is not, sacred.

But the law in permitting grave discussion, permits the right of judgment on this presumed sacredness. The accused, therefore, cannot in equity be bound to the judge’s prejudice in the matter. If we are permitted to entertain a doubt of the truth of any proposition, we should in reason be allowed to put forth those arguments which we deem most convincing against it; and if we think a proposition beneath the gravity of logical discussion, there is no reason why we should be forced to confine ourselves to that mode of argument. The judge, however, takes the whole point at issue into his own hands. The ideas to be overturned, he asserts are not early prejudices, not contrary to common sense, and therefore they are too respectable to be confuted in any other way, than in Barbara or in Baralipton. In other words, he declares, that ridicule is a good instrument to ex-

tirpate all errors, except those which he cherishes himself; and that it is available against all the world, but the dogmas which are “pack and parcel” of his law, and are incontrovertibly established on its authority.

On this point, the Catholics and Protestants would be much at issue. Many a grave Protestant divine has chuckled over Erasmus’s jest concerning the “real presence” of the horse, he forgot to return to its owner.*

To a Catholic, convinced of the truth of the doctrine of transubstantiation, it would appear an indecent levity, and misapplied ridicule: “flat blasphemy.” Why then should this argument be lawful as levelled against transubstantiation, and yet be unfair as applied against the miraculous conception? Simply because he who is the strongest happens to be a Protestant, without being also an Unitarian.

Ridicule is, in reality, a species of argument very peculiarly applicable to test religious dogmas. The propositions which constitute the elements of

* “Sic tibi rescribo, de tuo palfrido,
Crede quod habes et habes.”

a religious faith relate to "things not seen." There are no sensible types with which to compare them; and it is only by comparing the ideas with each other, and detecting their incongruities, that error can be demonstrated. This is the especial province of ridicule. When Alexander set up for a god, the ludicrous decree of the Lacedemonian senate betrayed the absurdity of his pretensions better than the most studied argument. The ridicule of the pagan theology scattered through the works of Lucian is a perpetual demonstration of the incongruity of abstract propositions, by means of sensible images. Yet persecuting, narrow sectarians have not thought it beneath their dignity to claim this writer as a believer, and to use his arguments against their opponents, though they bitterly execrate Swift and Voltaire for treading in his steps.

It is this peculiar efficacy of ridicule, that has made its use so objectionable to partizans and exclusionists. The happiness of its illustration renders truths popular, which would remain the exclusive property of the learned, as long as the error to which they are opposed was involved in the intricacy of an abstract argument. The sen-

sible image is a stepping-stone to the judgment of those, who, unused to dialectics, cannot thread the labyrinth of involuted ideas. Those who are interested in the credit of any particular doctrine are, in general, ready enough to compound for the dissent of the cultivated few: and they can bear with patience an argument, which, being beyond the calibre of the vulgar, is not likely to make many proselytes: but ridicule, being within the scope of all, brings absurdity home to the conviction of the meanest understanding. This is the secret of that hostility which the law manifests in the midst of its seeming candour, against certain attacks on the establishment. They are intelligible to all the world; and it is feared that their influence may be proportionate.

Whatever is incongruous and absurd, cannot emanate from a being pre-eminently wise and good. The internal evidence of such incongruity, is decisive against the pretensions of any religious system, in which it exists. Ridicule, therefore, goes to the fountain head of all false pretensions; and as one religion alone can be a real revelation from Heaven, it follows, that the partisans of all the

others, have an immediate interest in putting down the use of a ready instrument for measuring their several errors. What is the sum of their argument? You may put forth cogent and conclusive reason as long as you please; but beware of ridicule; for that proves nothing. This excess of candour and forbearance is not entitled to the slightest credit. It may, perhaps, be objected, that ridiculous no-proofs will pass current with the lower classes for valid argument. To this I reply, first, that the lower classes are not so innocent and helpless: or if they are, let them be better taught: and secondly, that they are much more frequently the dupes of grave and plausible no-proofs, than of humorous misrepresentation; and that the argument, if good for any thing, goes against all discussion whatever.

The defenders of absurdity and error are not always in the same story: for they always cry out against the argument which happens to press them the most closely. The counsel of Geneva censured Rousseau's gravity in attacking their religious notions; and asserted, in the teeth of the English law-maxim, that, "books, only written

to turn into ridicule, are not, *by a great deal*, so reprehensible, as those which, without stepping on one side, go at once to the attack by dry reasoning.* So much for the honesty of state dogmatists !

In advocating the lawfulness of ridicule, it is not necessary to advocate every instance in which it is employed. It is bad taste and buffoonery to put forward ludicrous ideas, out of season ; and it is both bad feeling and bad policy, to insult the believer by a profane jest. A man is not, however, to be committed to Newgate on a point of taste, or treated like a felon for not having read the institutes of Quintilian. Those who would thus proscribe ridicule in their opponents, are by no means slow in using it against them. Not only ridicule, but scurrility and invective, are daily lavished against those who are objects of religious rancour. What was reprehensible in Voltaire becomes laudable in Piron ; what was wrong in Swift was right in Rennell. A protestant bishop may crack a joke upon two non-ascendant religions with a

* Lettres écrites de la Montagne.

single antithesis ; but woe betide the man who is facetious upon the thirty-nine articles.

Within this sophism the lawyers have entrenched themselves, upon being driven, by public opinion, from an open and barefaced defence of persecution. By its assistance they are still enabled to fine or imprison, any one who presumes to question the truth of law-established dogma. It has taken some centuries to storm the outwork ; how many will it take to capture the citadel !

LEGISLATIVE LITERATURE.

LORD C—F—N was very amusing to-day : every thing he said was cleverly said ; full of information, and abounding in curious historic anecdote. I observe, that the elders of the English aristocracy have an amazing mass of historical knowledge. History is the mirror of aristocratical *amour-propre*. How I should read history if I were a Howard, or a Stanley, or a Russel ! The

knowledge of history is, besides, a part of the qualifications for an hereditary legislator ; and, of necessity, it engages the attention of those nobles, who are not above, or beneath, all sense of duty and propriety. The mischief of it is, that their tastes and education lead them rather to anecdote, than to philosophy ; and their knowledge consists more in facts, than in deductions. The ecclesiastical education of our English universities is at war with philosophy ; and the great reject all philosophy that is not genteel and within bounds, like Paley's. Dugald Stewart is their *ne plus ultra*. Of physiological philosophy, the philosophy of fact, they are usually ignorant. A single page of De Tracy would scare the whole House of Lords. Though they may very generally read the Heloise, they do not the less reject Rousseau's other works, as too philosophical,—Rousseau, the least philosophical of thinkers, and as vehement a hater of philosophers, as the author of the *Metromanie* himself ! “ If,” said Lord L——, to his old friend, General C——, who wanted him to purchase a duplicate set of Voltaire's works—“ if I were to let your Voltaire into my house, I should

expect the roof to fall and crush me." Another lord, to compare great things with small, actually burned my France, having first called his whole household to witness the solemnity. From the beginning of time this flaming argument has been the favourite *court moyen* with the powers that be. In this they do but follow the natural instinct which leads us to fear whatever we do not understand. Philosophy is, in truth, but a democratical piece of business : it knows nothing of castes and privileges : its object is only the happiness of mankind at large ; and it mounts not to the sublimity of vested rights, the transcendental of politics. But anecdotes, facts, and dates, the sayings and doings of our ancestors, are so useful, so imposing, so applicable to every thing and to nothing, they are so ornamental in discourse, and they so set off a debate !! What a figure they made in the discussions on the catholic question—the arguments of the E.'s, and the eloquence of the W.'s.

VICE REGAL PROGRESSES.

“ Les ambassadeurs envoyés en France par les princes étrangers, faisoient à Paris une entrée pompeuse et solennelle. Cet usage a subsisté jusque vers le milieu du dernier siècle : on ignore pourquoi il a été aboli.”*

Dict. des Etiquettes, par M. de Genlis.

I THINK however one may guess ! The age of pompous and solemn ceremonies, like the age of chivalry, is over, and for ever ; both belonged to times of ignorance and barbarism : and long before the great explosion from the revolutionary crater took place, public opinion and private comfort were undermining that mass of cumbrous forms, which weighed upon the feelings, tastes and enjoyments of the victims whose rank obliged them to submit to their galling infliction. If any now submit to the *gêne* of gorgeous state, it must be in the irremediable dulness which produces the lowest

* “ Foreign ambassadors formerly made a pompous and solemn entry into Paris. This usage subsisted until the middle of the last age : we know not why it was abolished.”

order of pride, and which is more gratified by figuring in a procession, than in the page of history, to illustrate the records of their country.

The Irish Lord Lieutenants of the olden times were subjected to all the pageantry, privation and display which then distinguished the majesty they represented. From the very starting post of official initiation, they were called on to abandon all the personal ease and independence of private life. They left England, and returned to it, according to certain rules and forms, which it would have been *leze-majesté* to have neglected. The interval of the commonwealth, had caused some of the forms of the vice-regal progress to be forgotten; yet in Charles the Second's time, we find Lord Essex writing to a friend, to find out, if he is to return in the same state with which he departed, and to prepare him a black suit trimmed with black ribbons, to make his grand entry into London; even though he returned in a sort of disgrace. Sir John Perrot's departure for the Lord Deputyship, as described by his quaint biographer, is a scene for a melodrama! He had received the queen's orders to sail with, and command the fleet, sent to inter-

cept the Spanish invaders directed against the Irish coasts, and “to interrupt the King of Spayne, and his Navie.”

“Then did Sir John Perrot prepare for that voiage, (to Ireland, by Waterford), with all convenient speede. He had with him fiftie men in orange tawny cloaks,” (think of that, ye *Brunswickers*; a Lord Lieutenant arriving in Ireland with fifty men in orange!!) “whereof divers were gentlemen of good birth and qualitie. Also he had a *Noyce* of musicians with hym, being his own servants. He was served all in silver plate, with all things else suitable; and soe being royally furnished in all respects, he departed from London, about August, and going from thence, by barge, he had with him divers noblemen and gentlemen, who did accompany hym unto the shipps. As they lay in this barge, against Greenwich, where the Queene kept her court, Sir John Perrot sent one of his gentlemen on shore, with a diamond, in a token unto Mistres Blanche Parry, willing hym to tell her, that a diamond coming unlooked for, did alwais bring goode looke along with it: which the Queene hearing of, sent Sir John Perrot a fair

jewell, hanged by a white cypresse; signifying withall that as longe as he wore that for her sake, she did believe, with God's healpe, he should have no harme; which message and jewell Sir John Perrot received joyfully; and he returned answer to the Queene, that he would weare that for his soveraigne's sake; and doubted not, with God's favour, to returne her shipps in safetie; and either to bring the Spaniards if they came in his way, as prisoners, or else to sink them in the sea. Soe as Sir John Perrot passed bye in his barge, the Queen looking out at the window, shaked her fan, and put out her hand towards him; who making a low obeysance, put the scarfe and jewell about his necke, which the queen sent him. Being arrived at Gyllingham, where the queen's shipps rode, Sir John feasted on shipboard such noblemen and gentlemen, as came with him thither."

After enduring every misery and vicissitude, and "storms and contrary winds," that the tyranny and caprice of the elements could inflict, after being obliged to put in by stress of weather, at Falmouth, Plymouth, and "soe sett sea to Ireland, and touched at Baltimore, and Waterford, and thereabouts,

upon the Irish coast ;” and having missed the Spanish ships, encountered pirates and chased corsairs “ to the Coste of Flaunders,” and his ship striking ground on the Kentish Knocks, and being all but lost, the unhappy Lord Deputy found himself, one fine day, driven near Harwich, and so sailed back into the Thames, after a three months unprosperous voyage.

His second descent upon Ireland, though more successful, was scarcely less tedious. Contrast this vice-regal progress, when the wisdom of our ancestors was wisest, with the progress of a Lord Lieutenant in these degenerate times, when setting aside all precedents, and discarding all time-honoured authorities, the new viceroy steps into his carriage for Ireland, as if he were stepping into his chaise for a visit to Kew, skims along the macadamized roads at ten miles an hour, and mounting his steam-boat, crosses St. George’s Channel, without touching at Falmouth, Plymouth, Baltimore, or Waterford ; and instead of finding himself at the end of three months in the mouth of the Thames, is in six hours comfortably seated at dinner in Dublin Castle, in an easy chair, cushioned

with eider or iron, as the innovations of the day, for which our ancestors were wise in vain, may suggest.

I do not defend this levelling principle of accommodation and comfort, that spares so many risks of life, of health, and of time, incurred when men on leaving Dublin for London, made their will, and invoked the prayers of the church in crossing to Park Gate. I do not presume to doubt the superiority of the times, which Madame de Genlis so fondly regrets: I merely state the fact of the vice-regal progress in the older and wiser times, as compared with the same journey at the present epoch, when we have fallen upon evil men who make good roads, and upon evil times, which have produced steam engines, and steam boats, without reference or respect to the immutable order of things established either at, or before 1688.

BAD BOOKS.

“ Je ferai quelque jour une apologie dans les formes, des plats et mauvais livres. Ils sont sans prix pour un bon esprit.”*

GRIMM, p. 1. T. 3. p. 107.

“ Il y a autant d'invention à s'enrichir par un sot livre, qu'il y a de sottise à l'acheter. C'est ignorer le goût du peuple que de ne pas hasarder quelquefois, de grandes fadaïses.”†

LA BRUYERE.

I HAVE just risen from perusing a tolerably accurate, but dull and unphilosophical censure of our modern literature. No more Miltons, no more Shakspeares, no more Bacons, and Jeremy Taylors!! One might as well lament that there were no more knights-errant and battering rams. Every age knows its own wants, and provides for them; and Milton would not probably succeed much better, were he to reappear in this

* “ Some day, or other, I will make a formal apology for bad books. They are invaluable to a sound thinker.”

† “ There is as much invention in making money by a bad book as there is folly in buying it. Not to hazard sometimes great nonsense is to be ignorant of public taste.”

nineteenth century, with a new *Paradise Lost*, than the Laureate, Robert Southey, Esq. has done with his *Vision of Judgment*. It must, indeed, be admitted, that if La Bruyère is right, our English booksellers are very inventive personages; for they produce more bad books than the rest of Europe put together. But there is also abundance of excellence afloat—of that precise excellence which society requires; and as the overflowing fertility of literature has generated a tact, prompt and accurate as an instinct, for discovering what books are to be bought and studied, what may be read, and what cast aside, the putting forth of nonsense and villainy is much less mischievous than is supposed. In fact, a man is drawn by a sort of elective attraction to the works which harmonize with his intellectual peculiarities, assort with his feelings, and dovetail with his wit, just as animals are drawn by nature to their appropriate bodily nourishment; and the frequency of bad books proves only that fools and knaves now employ their leisure in reading, instead of the more dangerous and brutal pastimes which occupied their predecessors.

This evil of bad books is no novelty. Whoever runs his eye over the catalogue lying on his library table, will be convinced, that in any age, the number of really useful and valuable works bore no very large proportion to the entire mass of literature. Men are apt to imagine, that Ovid, and Virgil, and Horace, had the field to themselves ; but the “mad, melting, reciters of August” were, no doubt, as abundant in their day, as in the silver age of latinity, which so rapidly followed. The unrolling of the manuscripts of Pompeii has proved that - “trash” preceded the invention of reviews, and belongs to an elder antiquity than that of “the Row:” and it may be questioned, whether, at the burning of the library at Alexandria, there were an hundred volumes utterly lost to the world, which were not more serviceable as fuel for the baths, than as food for the mind.

The first efforts of the press were expended in disseminating the accumulated errors of a thousand years, which had previously been in the exclusive possession of the few ; and since then, each successive generation has pretty equally divided its time between refuting the mistakes of its prede-

cessors, and popularizing and accrediting others of its own. Ignorance, pedantry, and bad taste, infect the earlier writers, notwithstanding their eloquence and energy. Their alchymy, their astrology, their witchcraft, were scarcely less mischievous, than their false morality and silly politics. Of theology it is dangerous to speak; but as every one will admit that whatever has been written without the pale of his own narrow sect, is pernicious error; and as what every body says must be true, the reader may draw his own consequence. Medicine, to this very day, continues a tissue of ill-understood facts, a chaos of false inferences and incongruous systems. The science of law is a nullity; and each particular code a standing monument of the barbarity and perversity of the species: and as for philosophy, why the less that is said on the subject the better. Of all the works of imagination, with which the press teemed during the last two centuries, how very few live and are read! History has ever been a record of errors, of party misrepresentation, and of mistaken views, passed through the cullender of the historian's fancy: while, as to essentials, it is the play of Hamlet,

with the part of the Prince of Denmark omitted by particular desire. Each generation, again, has had its harvest of pamphlets, embodying the corrupt interests and false views of the moment, which have fretted their little hour on the stage, and then have been consigned to the trunk-makers, pastry-cooks, and bibliomaniacs.

We are told that literature having become a matter of mercantile speculation, and authorship having acquired much pecuniary value, men are in haste to realize ; so that, among the multitude of competitors, an author dreads to be anticipated ; and hurries his crude thoughts before the public, lest, while he is digesting them, the market should change, and all chance of reward be cut off for ever. But if authors do not now “ keep their piece nine years,” something must be attributed also to the quickened movements of intellect : writing, aye, and thinking also, are more easily performed than formerly ; and a work is not always the worse for being thrown off at a heat.

Another cause for the multiplication of flimsy books, is the universality of authorship ; and this fashion for writing is, at least, as good a fashion as

that of driving coaches and beating the watch. When all sorts and conditions of persons publish, all sorts and conditions of persons must read ; and the annual quality of publications, is less an exponent of the talent in the market, than of the *minimum* of wit, sense and utility, beyond which the public will not buy. Let there arise a demand for any species of nonsense and absurdity, and there will be found a corresponding supply.

The last generation ran very much upon literary cobblers and poetic milk-maids. The present goes principally upon lords and honourables ; and low as the “ collective wisdom ” may rate in the estimation of some persons, M. P. in a title page, is worth at least an extra hundred pounds. Amateur writing, like amateur fiddling, need not be of the very best. Those who are placed beyond the reach of great interests, have rarely strong passions ; and if they trifle agreeably, they have done all that can reasonably be expected from them. The “ degenerate race to come,” will, perhaps, read nothing but the works of those who put their mark to their MS., who write by deputy, and publish by dictation : or, perhaps, Mr. Babbage, improving on his

calculating machine, will apply it to the purposes of general literature ; and then authors, like coach-horses, may be displaced by steam engines ; and “ the trade,” emigrating to Manchester or Birmingham, may send opinions into the market *per sample*, and manufacture doctrines of every shade and pattern, “ as bespoke.” For this change we are not wholly unprepared. Already the study is converted into a counting-house ; the ledger has become the true *primum mobile* of intellect ; and the rapid sale of a work is the signal for multiplying it, in all possible varieties, and in all sorts of spurious imitation. To-day, satirical poems are the vogue, to-morrow, *ottava rima* ; the next day, books of the church, and the day after, the lives of demireps of both sexes. The Scotch robber so lately “ your only wear,” is now falling into “ the sere and yellow leaf ;” and Heaven knows what embryo original is about to start a new idea, for the benefit of the writing community.

Another order of writers, peculiar to our age, are speculating tradesmen, who, treading on the heels of physicians, write books to puff their wares, and make their title page an advertisement of their

shop. Cooks and confectioners recommend the lightness of their pastry by that of their style; and put forward the flavour of their wit, as a specimen of that of their ragouts. Shakspeare speaks of "cutler's poetry;" but we boast of anthologies of razor-strop manufacturers, venders of lottery tickets, and composers of French wines.

To return, however, from the starting point, where is the vast evil of this teeming multiplicity, and its consequent mediocrity of books? The reviewers have set the fashion of obloquy and vituperation, as if blockheads and dolts were not their best friends, and as necessary to their trade as the evil spirit is said to be to that of the clergy, or thieves and rogues to my Lord Chief Justice. If none but good books appeared, what would become of their essays on "every thing in the world, and all that sort of thing," which form the "striking article" of their quarterly numbers. Reviewers should know that bad books make good reviews, exactly as "*de mauvais vin on fait de bon vinaigre*."* Without the necessary supply, adieu the opportunity for being witty in print, and of

* "Of bad wine is made good vinegar."

shewing forth your own superiority, and enlivening the town at the small expence of an author's feelings.

It is something very unreasonable and selfish in the wise and the learned to desire that nothing should be published but what suits themselves. The woollen manufacturer is not restricted to superfine articles, nor the Glasgow weaver to fine muslins. If the whole community must be clothed, even though all cannot afford to dress like gentlemen, by parity of reasoning, the whole should be amused, although all cannot afford to be wits and philosophers. We tolerate the fabrication of Tunbridge toys and glass beads, and boggle about the printing of somniferous essays for aldermen after dinner, of vapid novels for ladies' maids, and of sentimental mysticism for blue-stocking peeresses. It is no more than fair that such persons should be supplied with their favourite articles, and—

“ Porque como las paga el volgo, es justo
Hablar le en necio, para darle gusto.”*

LOPEZ DE VEGA.

* “ And since the vulgar pay for books, 'tis just
To take some pains to write down to their gust.”

As for the cant of bad books debasing the intellect and corrupting the morals of the public, the fact is quite the other way : it is the public who debauch the *littérateur*. None read silly and wicked books, but the silly and the wicked : and the charge is a mere confounding of cause and effect. But, were things otherwise, have not the public their taverns and gaming-houses, under the sanction of the highest authorities ?

Books are, or ought to be, pictures of the human mind ; and if the witty and the wise alone found a reflection of themselves in the productions of the press, the literary world would be as oddly constituted as the political. The virtual representation of the commons would be but a cold type of the general disfranchisement of the reading public. We have no need here of parliamentary returns to prove the fact. No bookseller, who knows what he is about, will have any thing to do with an original thinker, a man of science, a philosopher, or in general with any one whose matter exceeds “two handsome volumes in octavo.” Such works may be excellent, may confer lasting

benefits on the species, and entitle their authors to immortal fame; but they don't sell; or, at best, they make but a slow return of capital. "*Quis leget hæc?*" Mr. Colburn or Mr. Murray would ask; and the answer comes pat, "*vel duo vel nemo, turpe et miserabile.*" "Sir, let me see you and your works no more."

As an article of trade, we may say of books, that bad is the best. The nauseous absurdities of "cheap and nasty" tract societies, the spawn of delirious fanaticism or canting hypocrisy, "go off" better than the soundest works of a judicious churchman, and infinitely exceed the sale of the most popular political economy.

The human intellect, like the livery of London, must be addressed by its own recorder, and he who writes too deeply for his age, might as well write in a foreign language. If you will but write down to the level of the general understanding, shock no prejudice, startle no man's faith, break no new ground, give none the trouble of thinking, expose no mystery of the human breast, but "amuse the eyes" without "grieving the heart," you will, if not positively as dull as an

oyster, be sure of a third edition, and a place at half the tea-tables of London. The mediocre, the foolish, and the common-place, are the publisher's best customers; and to deprive them of their appropriate reading, would be as politically unjust, as it is economically impolitic. In literature, as in all things, we want a free trade: no embargoes on stupidity, no protecting duties on right opinions. Why should the harmless literature of nations, and the innocent amusement of the mass, be eclipsed or trampled under foot by an arrogant censorship? 'Twere worse than the three-piled sanctity of a judaical sabbath, or the anti-cake-and-ale virtue stolen from the puritans of the great rebellion.

But the evil of restraint would not stop here. The wisest and the best are sometimes glad to take refuge in a bad book, and to find relief from the dulness of their own thoughts in the absurdities of another's. It is a rich literary year that produces three first-rate novels, the supply to a moderate consumer, of barely ten days! How then are the public to get through a long summer's course of watering-places, without the aid of the secondary

Scotch novelists, and the third-rate imitators of Lord N. and Lady C. B.? In the long vacation, the chancellor himself might be reduced to the Minerva press, or be compelled to a second perusal of Almacks. Your hungry reader is not nice, or at worst he eats, like Pistol, his unsavoury leek, and grumbles. In this respect dulness has great privileges. Genius never writes in folio, and if it ventures in quarto, the bulk is as much owing to the publisher, as a dandy's to Stultz's buckram. Besides, there is a metaphysical length in a bad book, valuable to the literary glutton beyond expression. A volume of S.'s polemics is matter for a week, and a surfeit of all desire for reading for a month afterwards. In short, dulness is in literature, what bread is to a good dinner—it prevents the cayenne and *coulis* from palsying the palate, and spoiling the digestion. It is the bitter olive to good port, or a Cheshire cheese in a wine merchant's cellar. Certain philosophers have explained the existence of moral evil, as a necessary point of comparison for relishing the blessings of life; and if so, why may not

bad books be tolerated, as contributing to the delight with which we enjoy the few that are worth reading?

The same argument applies equally to error. Truth is "caviare to the general," and if given undiluted, the scandal would be intolerable. Literature is the food, not the physic of the mind; and till we see the opulent contented with roots and water, we must allow them the luxury of conventional nonsense. Without literary rogues and false prophets, also, there would be no controversy. Truth and error are too unfairly matched if both must have a fair hearing; but when one error is pitted against another, the quarrel is "a very pretty quarrel," and may afford good sport to the bystander. The controversialist puts not up Ajax's prayer for light; but, like Æneas, is concealed in his cloud, and lives and triumphs in the friendly darkness.

If it be the great defect of Catholicism that it closes the door against all inquiry, pure and unadulterated truth is equally liable to the imputation. Men are better engaged in bowling down each other's prejudices, than in not thinking at all.

If error were not recorded in print, it would not be canvassed, and “ *on doit savoir gré à ceux qui osent établir les paradoxes. Si la raison reçue se trouve vraie, on a l'avantage de croire par raison, ce qu'on croyait par habitude ; si elle est fausse, on est délivré d'une erreur.*”* (Condorcet.)

Few, if any books, are so totally worthless as not to contribute sometimes to the reader's ideas ; and what they do not communicate, they may suggest. There are likewise degrees of comparison in absurdity ; and as one nail drives out another, a mitigated piece of nonsense is a good cure for that which is more aggravated. One man's opinion may be true, as it respects another's, though false to the nature of things. Such opinions are stages on the journey of knowledge ; and they may serve the ignorant, though the philosopher despises them.

I have but one more consideration to urge, and that is the value of bad books as an instrument of commerce. What multitudes are supported by the

* “ We should be thankful to those who dare to broach paradoxes. If the received opinion be the truth, they occasion us the advantage of believing on reason, what before we credited by habit : if it be false, they deliver us from an error.”

mere manufacture! What type founders, ink makers, painters, engravers, paper makers, and pressmen! what folders, and stitchers, and distributors, tanners, leather-sellers, and binders, find an industrious and honest subsistence out of the small class of writers alone, who print for their own amusement, and whose circulation extends not beyond the presentation copies! How many live by "parsons much bemused in beer," by visitation charges, *libretti* for the opera, proceedings of learned societies, experiences of hypochondriacal old gentlemen, and hysterically evangelical ladies; religious novels by persons of quality, and novels of high life by persons who live in low! But enumeration is useless. All the good books in existence would not supply six months' matter for the London press. It is by the printing of nonsense alone, that booksellers ride in their coaches, that the revenue is supported, and a countless host of sooty artizans maintained in comfort and independence.

I should not feel, therefore, any great qualms of conscience in adding another volume to the mass, even at the risk of its being dull or foolish. A heavy volume is not worse than a heavy visiter,

and the book may be laid down without rudeness ; while the bore must be endured, until “ *il s’ennuie nous d’ennuyer.*” If the purchaser finds, too late, that he has bought folly or impertinence, let him put it in handsome binding ; for if gold and frippery will pass such qualities current when incarnated in a coxcomb, they will perhaps do as much for them when embodied in print. At all events the volume will fill a shelf as well as better books ; and this, after a time, becomes the destiny of the gravest authors, in the most select libraries. Not, however, that one should write expressly “ *afin d’embobliner les pauvres gens,*” but with a loyal intent to be as little stale, flat, and unprofitable as possible. Of this, however, authors are unfortunately not always the best judges ; and moreover there is so much danger in the imputation of setting the Thames on fire, that, what between reviewers, attornies general, and hypocritical readers, they have no great encouragement in putting forth their best wares.

DRAWING CHARACTERS.

“ Each cried, that is levell'd at me.”

MOLIERE was accused of putting living characters into his exquisite comedies. The ridicules of society were then so graphic, the Hôtel Rambouillet, the Jesuits, and the Court, all furnished such abundant materials to truth and satire, that the temptation to give to fiction the interest of fact, must have been irresistible. “ *C'est une chose étrange qu'on imprime les gens malgré eux,*”* observes the immortal author of the “ *Précieuses Ridicules,*” in allusion to the accusations made against him. But Moliere in drawing characters from the particular species and genus, avoided all personal allusion. Nobody's history was told,—nobody's secret was revealed ; but his enemies made his fine delineations of life and character, a subject of misrepresentation and persecution, from which

* “ It is strange that they will print folks without their leave.”

the power of the king only could protect him. It was Louis the XIVth, who sheltered him from the wrath of the Tartuffes, and supplied him, from his own observations, with some of the most striking characters in his works; for kings like to be amused, even at the expense of their dearest friends: and, provided their own characters, and conduct, and measures, are held sacred, for the rest, “*Sauve qui peut.*”

Party spirit, which, from a decree of imperial proscription, to a column in the lowest organ of purchaseable ribaldry, stops at no means of blackening its opponent, frequently avails itself of this instrument for bringing the self-love of the gullible to its side: and the legitimate satire on a prevailing vice or folly, is affixed to some particular individual, presumed to have been “put into the book” of the author, who is to be run down at the expence of truth, honesty, and honour. But between the ruffianism that attacks character for the gratifications of base, vindictive, and sordid passions, and that honest and courageous delineator of the peculiar vices or follies of the day, which comes under the head of what Moliere calls “*La Satire*

honnête et permise," there is the same difference, as between the hired assassin who way-lays and murders for a stated price, and the gallant soldier, who goes forth in the broad day to combat the enemy of public safety and public rights.

PICTURE FRAMES.

I AM a great amateur of old picture frames. Cardinal Fesch, who is considered, even in Italy, very high up in the scale of the cognoscenti, told me some very curious anecdotes concerning them. I think it was his Eminence who pointed out to me the most interesting frame extant. It enshrines a superb picture by Raphael, of a female saint, (I believe St. Eleanora.) It is in white and gold, exquisitely designed and carved by Benvenuto Cellini, who was sent by Pope Clement the VIIth, with the picture and frame to the great personage on whom the Pope bestowed it!—What a present!—and what persons!—Clement the VIIth!—Raphael!—Cel-

lini!—This Pope Clement was a true Medici, in his passionate love for the arts. In passing to mass every morning, through the beautiful Salon of the Belvidere, he always paused and made an offering at the shrine of its divine Apollo. It was he who employed Fra Giovagnolo Montorsoli, to restore the hand of that unrivalled statue; and he was wont to converse with the sculptor while he worked. When his ingenious task was finished, Clement made the artist a Canonico.

The oldest frames are I believe the *Cancelli*, so called, from the skreen work which shuts out the choir from the body of the church, and which they imitated. These frames are divided into compartments, (generally into three,) and the pictures are set in each compartment. They are frequently made with doors; and were used as altarpieces, in private oratories.*

The great painters of Italy not only drew the designs for their own frames, but occasionally

* There is one of these cancelli, or altarpieces, at the castle of Malahide, which escaped the religious rapacity of Myles Corbett, to whom Malahide was given by Oliver Cromwell; the Talbots being then driven into Connaught, the limbo of catholic gentility in Ireland.

worked at them. The goldsmith's art was then in great request; and many eminent painters of the sixteenth century, began life as working goldsmiths. Among these was Francesco Salviati, who had been also a velvet weaver. Some of the finest frames, embossed in silver, and studded with gems, were executed by these artist goldsmiths, who worked at them in the intervals of their more serious occupations: for at that epoch of the triumph of the arts, even the recreations of the artist were sought in the lighter branches of his divine profession. Vasari describes himself, Salviati, and other young artists, as employing their holiday hours in drawing from the best models in Florence; and again re-united in the workshop of the immortal Baccio Bandinelli, where they worked with renovated ambition, and exhaustless zeal; enduring miracles of privation and self-denial, such as it is supposed that the zeal of religion can alone support. At Rome, they continued the same laborious pursuit, animated by the same enthusiasm.*

* “E lavoravano con molto profitto, alle cose delle arti; non lasciando ne in palazzo, ne in altra parte di Roma, cosa alcuna notabile, che non disegnássero: e perche, quando il Papa era in palazzo, non potevano così stare a disegnare, subito che sua Santità cavalcava,

Not all the academic prizes, royal premiums and public exhibitions, could effect thus much for the arts. Founded by power, these institutions belong to mediocrity: the da Vincis, the Michel Angelos, the Raphaels, were beyond them! There are designs for picture frames, by the artists who preceded the epoch of academies, more beautiful in their drawing and execution, than any member of the modern academy of Rome could produce. I have the drawing of one now lying on my table, of the greatest possible beauty in design and workmanship. It combines fruit, birds, and flowers, the heads of animals, trophies, masks, and foliage, in the most perfect drawing; and all so happily blended, as to present nothing incongruous: the perfection of what is called the Arabesque. The art of picture frames fell with all the other arts; wood and plaister of the rudest form, badly gilt, succeeded to the exquisite carving, designs, and precious materials, which were lavished on the frames of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Nothing so paltry, so mean, or tasteless, as the modern frame.

come spesso faceva, entravano, per mezzo d'amici, in dette stanze a disegnare, e vi stavano dalla mattina alla sera, senza mangiare altro che un poco di pane."

ARISTOCRACY.

THE notion of an hereditary aristocracy being serviceable to the people by curbing the monarch, is opposed to all fact. The aristocracy is a class constituted, as it were, expressly for servitude. The extravagance of a single individual will lay a noble family for generations at the feet of a minister ; and, if this be wanting, the necessity of providing for younger children, at the public expense, works the same consequence. Tacitus tells us, that on the decline of the republic, the consular, patrician, and equestrian orders, rushed headlong into servitude ; and he adds, “ the more illustrious the family, the more corrupt and eager were the individuals.” In Spain, the aristocracy is entirely gangrened and worthless. In France, before and since the revolution, the highest nobility grasped at personal servitude in the household of the monarch. The indirect good this order has

effected in England, may be explained by the homely proverb, that declares the circumstance under which honest men come by their own. Kings granted concessions to the people to oppose them with more effect to the nobility; and the nobility made the people a pretext for opposing the sovereign; but both fought for themselves,—that is, for the power of ruling the state to their own exclusive advantage.

The brightest page in the history of aristocracies, is that which relates the events of the revolution of 1688. Yet, what a tissue of heartless intrigue, corruption, and tergiversation! what underhand correspondencies with the excluded family! what promptitude to overturn the work of their own hands, are displayed in the lives of the great men of that day! Since the revolution, the aristocracy have been the remora of civilization,—a feather-bed between the walls of despotism, and the battery of public opinion. A surplus wheel in the machinery of the state, they would long since have stopped the movements of government, if their subserviency did not adapt them to every impulse from the crown; while, by means of their

representatives in the House of Commons, they modify the proceedings of that body. At the moment in which I write, the influence of the aristocracy, in defeating a liberal ministry, in making the corn laws an affair of their peculiar "order," in opposing a necessary retrenchment of corrupt expenditure, prove to demonstration the futility of the received theory. Should public opinion, however, triumph in the lower house, the aristocracy must submit to reform, or be crushed. An enlightened people, and an anti-national aristocracy, cannot long co-exist.*

* That there are many bright personal exceptions, makes nothing against the truth of the general conclusion. Genius and virtue are superior to contingent circumstance ; and the Russels, the Hollands, and the Darnleys, are not to be placed in the common muster-roll of the class to which they belong. The vice, however, is in the system, and not in the individuals, and we daily feel its influence even on the liberal and enlightened ; who, when called upon to decide between privilege and the people, are too apt to have their judgments warped by the peculiarity of their position.

TEMPER.

THERE is a sort of fitful gaiety very peculiar to the ill tempered. I have known the most sullen and morose women light up with bursts of brilliant vivacity, which to me, who was aware of the real state of the atmosphere, loaded as it was with thunder and storm, appeared very awful. It was like the precursive lightnings, which manifest to the eye the density and blackness of the coming desolation.

The secret, the charm, the spell, that “makes to-morrow cheerful as to-day,” is the even, spring-like sunshine of the mind, which, though sometimes veiled by the vapour of a passing melancholy, is still seen, pure and bright, through the shadowy medium. This is worth all the explosions of hysterical gaiety in the world. Between the sadness of sensibility and the gloom of morosity, what a difference ! But the worst of it is, that, in both

instances, the *morale* goes for so little, and the *physique* for so much, that the drop or the drachm more or less, in the prescribed dose, makes the surly gay, and the gay sombre.

“There are individuals,” says the unrivalled Madame de Staal (Mademoiselle de Launey,) “whose good and bad humour are equally unbearable.” This was applied to her royal mistress and patroness, the Duchesse de Maine; but it is applicable to half the fine ladies and spoiled children of fashion and fortune, all the world over. There was nothing I dreaded half so much as getting into high favour with Lady —, when she got into high spirits. Her epilepsy of good humour was insupportable; such tyranny of kindness, such vociferation of gaiety! Running up the great stairs of — one day, I came against a friend, who was going down. “What are you flying from, in such haste?” he asked.

“From Lady —’s good humour,” said I.

He told my *mot*, and I lost my friend. How often does indiscretion pass for ingratitude! Yet the indiscreet are never ungrateful, for they are uncalculating; and ingratitude, coming from insen-

sibility, cannot act upon impulse. Strong impulses come of strong feelings; and strong feelings are the source of all that is great and good, not, alas! of all that is wise: and so end my inferences.

IGNORANCE.

PYTHAGORAS, we are told, invented the term philosopher, or “lover of wisdom,” because he could not conscientiously assume the appellation of “soph,” or wise man; and the greatest philosophers, and most knowing, have had the strongest conviction of the uncertainty of science: so that soph and sophism have become terms of contempt. Yet, how obstinate and stiff-necked is the bridling importance of genuine ignorance. How it looks conscious superiority over all! and gives out its oracular nonsense, and trite dogmas, as if they were the dicta of divine inspiration. “When I ope my lips, let no dog bark.”

“Thè conceit of knowledge,” says Montaigne,

“is the plague of man.” What, then, is it of women? A self-supposed infallible woman, with her organic feebleness backing her ignorance, is to be feared and shunned a thousand times more than the wit, and the blue-stockings. I tremble in her presence; and, making my best courtesy, get out of her way as fast as I can. Besides, such women have all (God bless the mark!) a natural antipathy to me; and, without vanity, I may say, “*pour cause.*”

BEAUX OF OLD.

WHAT funny fellows the dandies of the beginning of the last century were! A fine man, then, was like Sir Harry Wildair—“the joy of the playhouse, the life of the park!” Think of one of the fine men of the present day being a joy any where, or the life of any place!

No gentleman, then, walked out (when he did walk, for we find even Squire Western going to visit in a chair,) without a footman after him.

Dependence and ostentation are the characteristics of semi-civilization ! They are also infallible proofs of mediocrity in individuals, in all times and ages.

METHODISM AND MOLIERE.

“ IT is good to be merry and wise.” It is difficult to be wise and not to be merry. A few years back, when, in Dublin, it was a rage to be “serious,” some very foolish things took place, which, as they belong to the *Cronique Scandaleuse*, shall find no room here. It was then the fashion to give tea and tract-parties, to the exclusion of gay faces and pleasant conversation. I remember, on the same night Mrs. Fry preached at a party at Mrs. ——’s in Merrion-square, La Porte read out a comedy of Moliere’s at my *soirée* in Kildare-street. We both gave “*Les Précieuses Ridicules*,” in our several ways ; but my guests went away laughing, and hers yawning. *L’un portant l’autre*, mine had the best of it ; and Moliere *versus* Methodism, won the cause.

THE FLYING-FISH.

NATURALISTS have said that the power of the flying-fish has been given to it for the purpose of avoiding its powerful enemies of the deep. What, then, have the poor herrings done, that they should not fly? for they, too, have their enemies, no less intent upon “swallowing them quick,” than Buonaparte was the bishops, who prayed so fervently against the voracious propensities “of the great leviathan.” But this is not the worst of it; for after all, the gift bestowed, (or said to be given) as a special mark of good, on the flying-fish, was only a *mauvaise plaisanterie*: for he no sooner pops his head above water, than he encounters a new enemy, in certain sea-birds, equally Catholic in their fish-eating devotion; which force the wretched victim back to his native element, leaving it only the choice between becoming a constituent portion of a shark or an albatross. This is a dis-

tressing image, and the new-light doctrine is a relief to the fancy, which teaches that the flying-fish launches into the air in pursuit of pleasure, and is led only by an exuberance of temperament to sport in the sunshine, and sparkle in the waters, in all the happy wantonness of a joyous existence.

Who has not felt this buoyancy of spirit, this disposition to fly, when under the strong excitement of health and spirits? “*Portez-vous bien,*” says that true philosopher, St. Evremont, “*voilà à quoi tout doit aboutir.*” “Be well: that is the end to which all things should be directed:” but to this end how many of the elements of life must mingle. It is curious to observe the rapid changes which take place in our existence quite independently of external circumstance,—the light boundings of the spirit, the high beatings of the heart, unassignable to any foreign cause; and then the depressing laboured respiration, and sinking of the soul, though unconscious of a real sorrow. Even our dreams are under the influence of these inexplicable conditions. The aged and the hypochondriac never dream of flying; and even the young and the happy awaken sometimes under the influence

of impressions, more painful to feel than easy to account for.

The temperament of genius is peculiarly susceptible to these alterations of organic elasticity and depression. It is a true flying-fish of moral life, sporting in the sunshine, and shrinking under the cloud. Even philosophy itself takes its colour from the constitution. Optimism is the mere creation of a "pleased alacrity and cheer of mind;" and the Epicurean is but another word for a man who digests well; while the Cynic is only to be argued with by calomel. This may appear all very fanciful; but it has a practical corollary of undoubted certainty; and that is,—when you feel misanthropy and disgust creeping on you, instead of penning a diatribe against the nature of things, take a long walk. Air and exercise—a flying-fish excursion into the sunshine, are worth a whole army of syllogisms for harmonizing the pulses of thought. Nature is the poet's true book of reference. It was Shakspeare's. The *nature* of the French poets, even in their Augustine age, was *Versailles*, and the coteries, literary and gallant, *de la cour et la ville*.

TOLERATION.

Du CLOS has some admirable things in his excellent memoir of Louis XIV. Here is one :—
 “ *Nulle persécution, beaucoup d’indifférence, et d’oubli, c’est la mort de toutes les sectes.*”*

Madame D’Epinay, in her *Shew up Book* of the Church and State society of France, before the Revolution, draws a picture of this author, *peint en charge*. Still he was an admirable writer, and appears to have been an honest man.

* “No persecution, and plenty of indifference or forgetfulness, would be the death of all sects.”

OLD-FASHIONED FRIENDS.

WHAT a horrible thing it is to be ashamed of one's old friends, merely because they are old-fashioned. The other day some "*English epicures*," top-sawyers of London ton, dined with us, when a dropper-in, from Connaught, took a place (left vacant by a late apology). I had dined with my provincial guest many years back, and thought it the greatest possible honour to be asked to his Castle Rackrent. He then appeared to me a very fine person, and his table a very fine table. But, horror of horrors! what were my feelings when, uncovering the *entrée* next him, before the soup was removed, he asked one of the most noted Amphytrions of the day, if he should help him to some of the savories; and when, after calling *bouilli*, bully-beef! *petits-pâtés*, mutton-pies! soup, broth! *crème-au-pistache*, "*raspberry crame*!" and *fondue*, "*podden*!" he ended by sending back

his glass of ale, not because he “never touched malt,” but, because, as he told the servant, “he preferred his porther out of a *pewther pot*, after the ould fashion.” French cookery has made but slow progress among the “mere Irish,” in the remote provinces ; and “the *jug-day*” at Bogmore (far below the original from which it was copied) is still to be found in nearly all its details among the hospitable festivities of the genuine and unmixed descendants of Milesius.

The science of cookery is the science of civilization ; and considering the effect which the material, raw or cooked, has upon the digestion, and the digestion on the brain, it is a science of quite as much importance, as any other in the great scale of utility and consideration. When Lord Byron took to vegetable diet, he used to say to one, from whom I had the anecdote, “When you eat beef-steaks, a’n’t you afraid of committing murder ?”

IRISH BEGGARS.

“*Souhaiter les bonnes fêtes*” was thought provincial and old fashioned, even in the time of Louis the Fourteenth : in Ireland the custom is as fresh as ever. “Many happy Christmas’s, Easters, and Patrick’s days,” is the wish of the lower orders, and particularly of the mendicity of Dublin. The Irish beggars are perpetual calendars of days appointed by the church to be kept holy. The resources of their eloquence are indeed infinite, and their keen sense of the influence of pathos and humour on the feelings, (beyond the power of words or even facts to express,) is among the many proofs of the shrewdness and innate perceptions of the people, even in the very lowest state of human degradation · for what, on the scale of human wretchedness and prostration, is so low as the Irish beggar !

A book might be written on the mendicity of Dublin ; which, like the history of the country,

would be at once tragical and farcical. The prevalence of a religion which makes charity (uncalculated charity, the most mistaken and frequently the most selfish virtue,) a leading dogma, combines with the poverty of the people, to render beggary an *order*, almost as much tolerated and respected in Ireland as in India. Every quarter, and every street of the capital, had, some twenty years back, its established and privileged female beggar; who, known to the great, and maintained by their servants (for services given), was permitted to exercise the immunity of the court fools of old, and to address their superiors on the occasions of their ingress and egress, with a sort of servile familiarity, often seasoned by humour or tintured by sarcasm. Generally half mad, and always more than half drunk, their folly or their inebriety was deemed an excuse for their impertinence. Lady M—n—rs, descending the steps of her house to get into her carriage, was addressed by a well known beggar of her neighbourhood in the usual tone of supplication.

“Go away,” said her ladyship, “I will give you nothing.”

“ Och ! then long life to your ladyship ; and it’s often you gave us that, God bless you ! ” was the reply, in the same tone of imploring misery, as the charity was asked.

The beggar, who frequents Kildare-street, loitering about the portico of its club house, at two or three in the morning, observed the Rev. Mr. —— reel forth, and, before she could lend him her assistance, find his level in the kennel. In that state herself, in which “ ladies wish to be who love their ” glass, and unable to extricate the reverend gentleman, who—

“ All inspired lay beside a sink,
And to mere mortals seemed a priest in drink,”

she sat herself in the mud beside him, and began to “ *keen* ” over him thus :

“ Jemmy ——, Jemmy —— ; there you lie, machrée, this blessed morning in the gutter, an honour to your cloth and calling ; and where are yez all, now, that has’nt left the likes of yez behind, only the Reverend Jemmy in the gutter here. God be wid yez, Denis Bowes ! and Charley Ornesby ! and rest your souls ! for it’s

little the likes of you, now, we'll see again !”
Thus sung the modern Bragela !

“ The mighty are dispersed at Temora ! there is none in Cormac’s hall. Bragela will not hope for your return. She has the arms of him who is no more.”

This sort of apostrophe to old friendships or connexions, is a very common art in the eloquence of Irish mendicity : to awaken your feelings, to seize on your imagination by a sudden reference to some friend, once the daily visitant of your house, or known partizan of your opinions, is a mode of influence frequently resorted to. It was so the other day in my own instance, and by the very Bragela of the Rev. Jemmy.

“ Ye have nothing for me the day, my lady ? Well, sure you won’t be so, plaze God ; and God be with poor Counsellor B——.* He took the *could*

* The deceased friend here alluded to, partook largely of the wit and intellect of a family, to whose members, male and female, it is the fashion in Ireland to apply “ *l’esprit de Mortimar*,” as a distinction. It is saying nothing, to say of Mr. B——, that he was one of the few surviving conservators of the peculiar wit, humour, and national information which once distinguished “ *the order of gentlemen*” in Ireland ! I not only lost in him “ *mon meilleur*

(cold) out of my heart and gave me charity on the steps of this very door : and its little the likes of him will ever darken your threshhold, lady dear, again, any how—rest his sowl ! Well, success to Hamilton Rowan, and Counsellor Shiel. Shure there's life in a muscle, and luck before us yet.—Hurrah for ould Ireland !”

Old friends gone for ever ! with Shiel and Hamilton Rowan and ould Ireland ! These were well worth the trifle they extorted : and, thus invoked, patriotism “gave, ere charity began !”

causeur,” as Madame de Villette said on losing her friend Champfort, but one to whose judgment on all that was characteristically Irish, I could always refer with confidence, and by whose approbation I was always flattered and assured.

OBSOLETISMS.

“ Words that wise Raleigh and sage Bacon spake.”

THE late Bishop of Ossory (Dr. Kearney), so distinguished by his literary attainments, who, though a bishop, was not ashamed to express his enthusiastic admiration of Shakspeare, frequently told me, that he thought the best commentators on that immortal genius would be found in the upper gallery of an Irish theatre. How many words, that have puzzled the learned for the last century, could find a ready explanation among the catholic gentry, and even lower orders in Connaught and Munster ! Language in Ireland stopped short, with every other improvement, at the revolution ; and the penal statutes had an equal effect on the liberties and the philology of the people.

Speaking of Anthony (in Anthony and Cleopatra), Philo says,

“ His captain’s heart,
Which in the scuffles of great fight hath burst
The bucklers on his breast, reneges all temper.”

The word "*renege*," a *poser* to the English reader, is used nightly at every catholic card table in the Irish provinces; where at the old fashioned Irish game of five and forty, an old lady "*reneges*" a card (imprudently played) by the licence of the game. In Queen Elizabeth's time every one wrote *hir* for *her*; in Ireland it is still pronounced so. Not a phrase, not an idiom, is now in use among the common Irish down to the lowest classes, that may not be found in the most classic authors of Elizabeth's and James the first's day.

"Plaze your honour," an address of courtesy now confined to the Irish spalpeen or cottier, after having passed through the hands of the upper servants and tradesmen of fifty years back, was once an address of respect from lord keepers to lord chamberlains, and from noble to noble, down to the time of Charles the First. The Earl of Middlesex begins all his letters to the Duke of Buckingham (James the First's favourite) with "My most honoured Lord." Lord Chancellor Bacon addresses with "If it may please your lordship," and even in colloquial familiarity, "your honour" was a phrase of courtesy, addressed to both sexes.

But obsoletisms are constantly mistaken for vulgarisms. In as much, indeed, as they are exploded forms, which have fallen to the exclusive use of the vulgar, they are so : for the vulgar of all ages are those who stand still, and make no progress either in language or in its source, ideas. The vulgar tongue, is the tongue spoken by the people. Dante and Petrarch were said to write in the vulgar tongue ; it is now erudition to be able to read and understand them.

To begin letters with a long, formal, and ceremonious address, was the fashion in England up to the time of Charles the Second, whose court introduced the more refined simplicity of French forms and manners. “ Right honourable ! ” “ My singular good lord ! ” “ My right worthy ! ” and “ May it please your grace,” “ honour,” “ worship,” or “ lordship,” were all swept away with stiff stays and cumbrous fardingales ; and the letters from “ yours, faithfully, Charles Rex,” to Harry Bennet, on the serious subject of Courants, Sarabands, and “ small fiddlers that do not play ill on the fiddle,” exhibit a very different formula, from the letters of the discreet and well affected

persons of quality of the preceding reign. They, in fact, have all the ease, familiarity, and equality of the charming letters of the Sévigné's, Coulanges, and De Retz, if not their wit, elegance, or good taste.

I have frequently observed, in the late Marquis of A—— and many of his noble contemporaries, a tendency to pronounce after the old manner, as “*hull*,” for whole; “*marchant*,” for merchant; “*cheney*,” for china; “*showlder*,” for shoulder; “*buzzoms*,” for bosoms, &c.; and this pronunciation answers to the orthography of the great lords and ladies of Whitehall after the restoration, who being “*un peu brouillés avec l’alphabet*,” endeavoured to spell as near to the sounds of words as they could. The Duchess of Cleveland, writing to the king, says, “*I never was so surprized in my hulle life*,” &c. &c. &c. Jonathan Wild quizzes the ordinary of Newgate for falling into this jacobite pronunciation, by spelling *whole*, *hull*.

Many forms of courtesy, rites of hospitality, and traits of habits, manners, and customs, to be found in the old comedies, from the time of Elizabeth to Anne, are still observable in the remote

parts of Ireland ; a country which, like an old coffer in the country mansion of an old fashioned family, is the exchequer of all the odds and ends and relics of modes long passed, and exploded in modern life.

I remember, in my childhood, dining at the country house of an old catholic family, where, after the chaplain had pronounced an interminable grace, the lady of the mansion rose, and bowing round graciously to her company, pronounced, "much good may it do ye," which was always followed, at the end of the dinner, by the observation that none of her guests had eaten any thing ; indicating the delicacy of their appetites, and the unworthiness of her table.

A few months back, having stopped to change horses at a road-side inn, and the horses having to be sent for to the field, we alighted, and found the family at dinner in the reception room, which was also the kitchen. A wretched man, begging his way to Dublin, half-naked, and half starved, and so faint from want, cold, and exhaustion, as to be scarcely articulate, paused at the threshold, and moving the crown of a leafless hat, said, " Much good may it do ye, genteels !" This form of

courtesy, in practice among the gentry not many years back, has now fallen to the very lowest classes of society; and this is the history of manners, as well as of phraseology. In Shakspeare's time the salutation of the modern Irish beggar to the peasant, was deemed a trait of royal courtesy.

The modern house-maid, who accompanies her lover, the footman, to the upper gallery, flushes at the coarseness of the fine ladies of Wycherley, Vanbrugh, and Farquhar; and feels her own superiority in modesty and gentility to the lovely Lady Lurewell, or even to the prudent Angelica of Sir Harry Wildair.

Tales, novels, and dramas, are the true sources from which the philosophy of manners can best be drawn, and are illustrative of the progress of society at various and successive epochs. History does nothing in this respect; and modern historians, in this point of view, are infinitely less valuable and useful, than the dryest chronicler of the middle ages. A page of Froissart is worth a volume of Hume, (who, as an historian, by the by, is daily losing ground in public estimation). The literary fiction, which gives cotemporary manners, modes,

and prevailing phraseology, has a fair chance of surviving the tale which, placed in a remote epoch, creates a manner and a dialect neither illustrative of the times of which it treats, nor the times in which it is written. This is the fault of the beautiful romance of *Ivanhoe*, which is written with all the colouring and dialect of Queen Elizabeth's day, copied, even to set idioms and phrases, from Shakspeare and the play-writers of his time.

English was not spoken in the time of King John; the people spoke Saxon, the upper classes Norman-French. When Shakspeare wrote his play of King John, he did not affect to go back to the style and language of Henry the Fifth, because he could not employ that which was in use when his scene was supposed to take place. He therefore wrote in the language of his own times; and among the many admirable qualities of his inspired authorship, not the least admirable is, that he has given in his dramas, the very tone, accent, idioms, and manner of colloquial communication, from the court to the peasant's hut.

To know how exactly Shakspeare has copied ex-

isting forms, and to account for the rapidity with which he wrote, it is only necessary to read some of the memoirs and chronicles of Henry the Eighth's and Elizabeth's day, where dialogues on every state affair, carried on by ministers, secretaries, and Irish Lords Lieutenant, are given verbatim,—all ready to go upon the stage, and to pass for a scene of Shakspeare's or Ben Jonson's,—just as a group at the Hague or Cologne, still exhibits a high toned picture of Vandervelt or Rembrandt.

I open at random a volume from the shelf of the book-case of the dressing-room in which I write, and copy literally a scene and dialogue, meant only to be a simple narrative. It is taken from Campion's *Historie of Ireland*, written 1571;—the scene is a room at court,—several lords sitting in commission on Gerald Fitzgerald, Earle of Kildare, “a gentleman valiant and well spoken, yet in his latter time overtaken with vehement suspicion of sundrie treasons.” The Cardinal Chancellor Wolsey is his inveterate enemy and chief accuser. It requires no great effort of imagination to conceive the place and persons of this veracious drama.

The gloomy gothic chamber, the ponderous costume of the lords, many of whom have been made familiar to posterity by the pencil of Vandyke, the sober splendour of Wolsey's habit, his scarlet hat, and glittering crucifix, the picturesque habit, and more picturesque person of the Geraldine,—his gigantic form, and stern, bold bearing, waiting in indignant silence for the accusations to be made against him, by a powerful and interested enemy. After a solemn pause, the lords “being diversly affectioned,” the Cardinal Chancellor broke forth in these words :

“ I wot well, my lord, that I am not the meetest man at this board to charge you with these treasons ; because it hath pleased some of your fellows to report that I am a professed enemy of the Geraldines. I must have leave, notwithstanding your stale slander, to be the mouth of these honourable persons at this time, and to trumpe your treasons in your way, howsoever you take me.

“ First, You remember how the lewde Earle, your kiusman, who passeth not whom he serve, might he change his master, sent his confederates with letters of credence to Francis the French king.

How many letters?—what precepts?—what threats have been sent you to apprehend him?—and yet not done; why so?—Forsooth, I could not catch him. Nay, nay, Earle, forsooth you would not nighly watch him. If he be justly suspected, why are you partial in so great a charge? If not, why are you fearful to have him tryed? Surely, this juggling and false play little became either an honest man called to such honour, or a nobleman put in such trust. Had you lossed but a cow or a garron of your owne, two hundred kyrneghis (kirns) would have come at your whistle, to reseue the prey from the uttermost edge of Ulster. All the Irish in Ireland must have given you way. But in persuing so weighty a matter as this, merciful God, how nice, how dangerous, how wayward have you bin? I wis, my lord, there be shrewde bogges in the borders, for the Earle of Kildare to fear.”

Whilst the Cardinal was speaking, the Earl chafed and changed colour, and sundry proffers made to answer every sentence as it came. At last he broke out, and interrupted them thus—

“ My Lord Chancellor,—I beseech you pardon

me. I am short witted, and you, I perceive, intend a long tale. If you proceede in this order, half my purgation will be loste for lack of carriage. I have no schoole tricks, nor art of memory: except you hear me, while I remember your words, your second process will hammer out the former. What my cousin Desmond hath compassed, as I know not, so I beshrew his naked heart for holding out so long. Cannot the Earle of Desmond shift, but I must be of counsell?—Cannot hee bee hid, except I winke?—If hee bee close, am I his mate?—If hee bee friended, am I a traytour? This is a doughty kind of accusation which they urge against me, wherein they are stabled and mirde, at my first deniall. ‘You would not see him,’ say they;—‘who made them so familiar with mine eyesight?—As touching my kingdom, my lord, I would that you and I had exchanged kingdoms, but for one moneth, I would trust to gather up more crummes in that space than twice the revenues of my poor earldome. But you are well and warm, and so hold you; and upbraide not me with such an odious storme. I sleep in a cabin, when you lie soft on a bed of downe. I serve under the cope of heaven,

when you are served under a canopy. I drink water out of a scull, when you drinke out of golden cuppes. My courser is trained to the field, when your jennet is taught to amble. When you are be-graced, and belorded, and crouched and kneeled unto, then I find small grace with our Irish borderers, except I cut them off by the knees.’”

A CHARACTER.

MR. ——— is that sort of man, who has all the faults that help to please, and forbid to serve. His character is a study; his great talent is his power of assimilation. He is never displaced, never out of keeping with times, persons, or circumstances. He dovetails with all opinions and all orders of intellect—a perfect Aristippus. He is like mustard-seed: fling him where you will, he takes root on the surface and flourishes. Sow him in a hot-bed, in a flannel cap, in a lady’s beau-pot, or in a potatoe ridge, *c’est égal*.

THE DÉLAISSÉ.

THE most dissipated man, who has once known the distinction of being loved by a woman capable of the intense devotedness which springs from passionate feelings and strong intellect, must feel a dreadful void when he is loved no longer. Deserting, or deserted, he will feel it with remorse, or with mortification. The passing fancy of the light and the foolish leaves no scar behind; the wound closes rapidly, and all is forgotten.



TAVERNS.

“ You may be wise in your study in the morning,” (says brow-beating Johnson, to his gape-mouthed admirer Boswell,) “ and gay in company at a tavern in the evening.” What a trait of manners ! Fancy a man of fashion, or a man of letters, or any man, in the rank of a gentleman, setting

forth after dinner, to be “ gay at a tavern in an evening.”

The tavern life has now fallen to the lowest classes of society. In the time of Charles, and James the Second, princes of the blood, and the proudest of the peerage, frequented the tavern. In Louis the Fourteenth's day, men of fashion resorted to places of the same description in France; and ladies of rank, by way of a frolic, sometimes accompanied them to some fashionable auberge in the suburbs, or the Boulevards. In another half century, there will be nothing between the common chop-house, and a magnificent club—between Crockford's, and “ the cheap and nasty.” The improvements of social and domestic life are filling up the intervals. The improvements in female education are also giving a charm to home, which it wanted in those times, when the women were treated as slaves or sultanas in one class; and were deemed in others creatures only fit

“ To suckle fools and chronicle small beer.”

SOLEMN BLOCKHEADS.

“Eh ! qui ne connoît pas la gravité des sots.”

CHENIER.

LAST night I met Mr. —— at Lord A——’s. What a solemn blockhead ! Unluckily for him, he has precisely that sort of learning, which draws out fools from their obscurity, and drives them from the secure asylum of their insignificance, to a public exhibition of their inefficiency. Still, such men get on ! and, under the present system, make their way to place, and power, and endowment.

For the last twenty years, there was scarcely an instance of a man of very superior genius, or of great intellectual strength, being employed in the public offices of the greatest nation of the earth. A few shrewd, acute clerks worked their way into the subordinate places in the state ; but the moment they were found to be too shrewd for their masters, they were got rid of.

There is nothing so fearful as a nation becoming more enlightened than its government. Of such elements was the French revolution composed.

CATHOLIC PETITIONS.

THE earliest petition I know of, on behalf of the Roman Catholics is that addressed to James the First, beginning, “Most Puissant Prince, and Orient Monarch !” In this petition the sufferers class their persecutors as being Protestants, Puritans, and atheists, or polititians : a meddler in politics, in the days of the absolute Stuarts, was set down as an atheist.

LAUGHING AND CRYING.

THIS morning, in describing a scene of distress I had witnessed a few days back, the tears dropped fast from M——’s eyes ; and yet I know few firmer intellects ; but the finest metals dissolve the easiest. It is extremely difficult to draw tears from blockheads, except when muddled ; and then they

talk of themselves, and are pathetic. It is easier to make "butchers weep," than to move the self-sufficient coxcomb who is wrapt up exclusively in his own importance, to the exclusion of all human sympathy. But, after all, I doubt if the gift of laughing heartily be not an equal proof of feeling. Alas! for those who neither laugh nor weep! and doubly alas! for those who are obliged to live with them! There is an immense variety and character in laughs. I have often heard it said of the Countess of C——, that her laugh is even more beautiful than her face. One could write chapters upon this subject; and perhaps I shall do so some of these days, even at the risk of being laughed at for my pedantry, for there really are a great many odd things to be said on the subject. Somebody has written a catalogue of persons who died laughing.

EXPECTATION.

It is pleasant to expect ; at least it is so in youth, when temperament and inexperience combine to paint life *en beau*. Expectation is hope coloured by fancy. It is a proof of abundant vitality ; and even when disappointment falls over it, like a shadow, it is still worth its purchase.

“ Ah ! que ne puis-je encore l’attendre,
Dût-il encore ne pas venir.”*

This is perfectly in nature. The old seldom expect. It is among the terrible inflictions of age, when humanity loses so many of its attributes, that the heart sends forth none of those shoots of expectation which fill up the intervals of actual enjoyment. The sap is dried, and the trunk is shrivelled—shrunk in its dimensions, and seared on its surface ; and the branch, and the flower, and the fruit have withered and dropped. “The spring

* “ Alas ! why cannot I still expect him, even though he should not come.”

shall return with its blossoms ; but of me not a leaf shall arise," says Ossian. Alas for the beauty, the truth, and the sadness of this image !

THE DEVOTEE.

UNDER the old regime in France, the first symptom of a woman's intending to " give herself to God" (*se donner à Dieu*, as the phrase ran) was her giving up rouge ; so that paint and piety became inseparably connected in the minds of the demi-saints, and demireps, of the profligate reign of Louis XIV. " La Princesse d'Harcourt," says Madame de Coulanges, in one of her letters, " has appeared at court, without rouge. This is a circumstance which, for the present, absorbs every other : one may add, that it is a great sacrifice."

This outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, this toilette baptism of regeneration, is not peculiar to Catholics. The sacrifice of rouge is but the grey gown and little bonnet of an English Methodist ; and the rigorous proscription of gay

colours of the Protestant sectarian is but the counterpart of what appears so ridiculous in the French penitent, "*qui se jette dans la dévotion*,"—who gives herself up to Heaven when nobody else will have her. On this subject, Madame du Deffand, the blind and aged enamorata of Horace Walpole, is singularly pleasant. When she was young and pretty, and the enamorata of the President d'Hainhault, she took a sudden fit of devotion; and her director stipulated for the usual sacrifices. Fasts, prayers, &c. &c. were promised at the first word; but when it came to love, and the toilette, she cut him short at once, with "*pour ce qui est du rouge, et du président, je ne leur ferai pas l'honneur de les quitter.*"*

* "As for the rouge and the president, I shall not give them the honors of a rupture."

HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS.

“WE dined at Mr. H.’s,” says Bozzy, in his delightful book of twaddle, which has proved such an evidence of the world’s love of idle gossip—
 “We dined at Mr. H.’s (Dr. Johnson and myself), and Mr. H. expected Miss Helen Maria Williams. He gave her Ode on Peace to Dr. Johnson; and when this amiable, elegant, and accomplished young lady entered, he (Dr. J.) took her hand in the most courteous manner, and repeated the finest stanza of her poem. He complained of ill health, and said to Miss Williams, ‘I am very ill, when you are near me; what should I be if you were at a distance?’”

Young, amiable, elegant, and a poetess! Sylphs, nymphs, and muses, how ye glided before me when, at sixteen, I read this passage in a green harbour at B—— Castle! Then, to think of Dr. Cerberus growling gallantries: hearts of stone! what were your callosity under the influence of Helen

Maria's eyes ! I immediately wrote an ode to Helen Maria Williams, with all the rhymes borrowed from Pope's Essay on Man, and all the spirit from Anna Matilda's Farewell to Della Crusca (my constant study). My ode was quite as good as the poetry of rhyming young ladies of sixteen generally is. There was not an original thought in it ; but then there were such pretty sounding words ! and it began, too, I remember, with " Oh ! thou." I was most desirous to send my ode to Miss Williams without knowing any thing of her " whereabouts," partly for her sake, and very much for my own ; for I really thought the composition Sapphic, and when my volume of poems was published immediately after, (my *début* in authorship, of which nobody ever heard,) I was no less anxious to print it. But I did not. Still, however, my imagination was full of its fair subject, of whom I only knew what Bozzy had told me ; and the lapse of time which had intervened since he wrote, never suggested itself.

I was then in the commencement of my intimacy with Mrs. Le Fanu, the presiding priestess of the muses in Dublin ; and I wrote to her on the sub-

ject, and received the following pleasant and sensible letter, which I have just tossed out of my portfolio, and which has brought the long forgotten subject to my recollection, in all its original freshness. The whole letter is so fair a specimen of the style of the literary ladies of the old school, so like the charming conversation of the writer, and so good a lesson to young ladies who write odes, and who read and write sentimental novels, (besides its coming from a Sheridan,) that I will transcribe it at large.

“Imagine to yourself, *ma belle amie*, how very *gay* I must feel, when I tell you I have had a confinement of near five weeks. I caught a feverish cold and sore throat, and, at the end of a fortnight, supposing myself in a manner well, I went out to take the air, or rather the damp, (for nothing else was to be had;) and I came home with rheumatic pains, first in my lungs, which removed to my right shoulder and arm, which confined me to my bed, where I was as agreeably as St. Laurence on his gridiron. Thank God I am better, and hope revives, though the season be cheerless; but every

day brings us nearer the spring, and as Madame de Sévigné observes, no one stops short in the midst of a month, or a bad road, for want of power to get through it. So *vive la patience*, best friend in sickness or sorrow. You recollect, no doubt, Mason's beautiful personification of it, in Elfrida. 'Patience here, her meek hands folded on her modest breast, in mute submission lifts the adoring eye, even to the storm that wrecks her.' The following is (I think) no bad invocation to the temperate goddess:—

‘ Oh ! Patience, heavenly power, hear !
Be ever to thy suppliant near,
Nor let one murmur rise ;
Since still some mighty joys are given,
Dear to her soul, the gift of heaven,
The sweet domestic ties.’

You are precisely at the age ; you are exactly of the character of mind to admire more the splendid than the useful virtues. They ever attract and still deceive. How many have lulled themselves into perfect self-satisfaction upon the strength of quick feelings, tender emotions, and easily excited sympathies, who have never practised the everyday qualities that come perpetually into play, and

are essential to human happiness. Good humour, according to Johnson's definition, endurance of the follies and absurdities of others, appear qualities of such easy attainment, that they are neglected as vulgar. What a mistake—how fatal in its consequences! Talents extort admiration; but genuine and habitual affectionate feelings alone beget love. Well has Rousseau insisted so much upon the '*cœur aimant*' of Julie. I know two women, both highly gifted, the one of very striking and generally admired talents, the other possessing taste and powers of conversation in a very high degree, yet neither of them can boast the possession of one friend even in their own families. For, 'proud with opinion of superior merit,' it tinctures their manners, it renders even their condescension offensive. And à propos to remarkable women, Helen Maria Williams's history is briefly as follows:—I believe it is many years since she first came forward as a literary character. The novel of Julia was, I think, her first publication: it has merit, but certainly a very bad tendency—some of the poetry in it is, I think, very beautiful. She was soon known to Dr. Johnson and other literary cha-

acters. She was at that time not more than twenty. The year after the French revolution, she was in Paris, and was present at a meeting of the National Assembly, of which she gives a very lively picture. In Paris she met a Mr. Stone, a married man; but with a noble disdain of every opinion we are bound by the laws of God and man to respect, she chose this gentleman for her companion in a tour to Switzerland. Perhaps you will think me harsh in my judgment, but certainly a woman possessing those talents that necessarily imply strong and delicate feelings, more justly incurs blame than another, when she sacrifices to passion the respectability of her character, and voluntarily incurs contempt when she might command respect and admiration. She becomes useless when she might highly benefit her fellow-creatures.*

* It is not without much pain that I revive the memory of circumstances, which ought to lie buried in the tomb of the eminent lady to whom they relate. There is nothing so certain, as that morality varies with times and places; and that to censure conduct without reference to the age and nation of the individual, is substantial injustice. Helen Maria Williams came into life at a moment when the malignant influence of bad institutions on hap-

“ As I have not been out, I gave your two commissions to Tom. Archer has not yet received the English edition of St. Clair. He also called at Power’s music shop, who lays the fault upon Stevenson that Castle Hyde has not yet come out. He has had it, I know not what time, to put basses to it.

“ I have just been reading St. Clair for the third time, and was more pleased with it than at first, but I think the hero and heroine very dangerous people. You will tell me that the catastrophe would prevent any mischief arising from the witchery of such characters. I do not think so, for we all know that people are not punished in this world because they are vicious ; and (as Horatio has it) ‘ to be good ’ is not always ‘ to be happy.’ Moralists lead you into errors, and often throw you into despair, when they tell you so ; for if *you*

piness, and the prevailing hypocrisy of the times, had rendered every moral principle problematical, and, like her highly gifted cotemporary, the author of the Rights of Woman, she fell into the common error of supposing, that whatever is opposed to wrong must be right. But, though the individual should not be hastily condemned, the interests of the younger part of my own sex require that the error should be signalized. Female purity is indispensable to social happiness. It is one of nature’s own laws ; and is never violated with impunity.

are good to the best of your lights and means, and the events of your life are disastrous, you will certainly not feel *happy*, though you may be resigned ; and you will then, like Burgher's Leonora, either be tempted to arraign Providence, or reject altogether doctrines, of which you have found the fallacy."

Time passed : and it became my turn to receive odes from young ladies in the country, beginning "Oh thou," quite as good and as poetical as my own. Yet oh ! how many successive idols of admiration had my fancy erected in the interval. There was Miss Edgeworth, and Madame de Staël, and Madame Cottin, and Miss Baillie, and a long *et cetera* of literary females, to each and all of whom I felt the sincerest gratitude for the amusement and instruction they afforded me, though I did not write them odes to tell them so.

On my arrival in Paris in 1816, I found that I also had my *petit bout de réputation*, such as it was ; that my letters of recommendation were letters of supererogation, and that I had nothing to do, but sit quiet (no very easy task by the by for

me), and to see and receive all that was best worth seeing and receiving in France. On looking over a list of visitors, one day, presented by Pierre, the porter of the Hôtel d'Orléans, I read the immortal name of Humboldt, and under it, Helen Maria Williams, Rue de Bondi. A visit from Humboldt was always an epoch; and a visit from Helen Maria, the amiable and elegant, the subject of my first ode, was no vulgar event. I made my inquiries as to the present position of the admired of Dr. Johnson, and the adored of Bozzy; and learned that for the last quarter of a century she had lived in literary retirement, in the neighbourhood of the Sévignés, and the Ninons; that she was much beloved and esteemed, surrounded by a circle of sober, sedate, literary friends, and much *liée* with the enlightened Protestant party in France, and their excellent chief, who (with the name of the protestant Pope, given him by Napoleon) was respectable and influential with all parties. I immediately returned her visit, wrote my name at her door, and shortly after received an invitation to a *soirée*, which I accepted.

I happened to be asked, for this very same evening, to a ball at Lord H——k's; and was accord-

ingly obliged to go to Miss Williams's sober and learned party in all the *tulle* and tiffany of a *robe purée*. We were ushered into just such a room as that, in which one might suppose Mad. du Deffand received her coterie. A few wax lights dimly discovered its gloomy vastness; and "in the haze of distance," a row of large, dark bonnets, was visible, which, on a nearer approach, obviously gave shelter to as many intelligent, but not very blooming countenances. Small groups of men recalling the *hommes de lettres* of old France, were scattered, in earnest conversation; and tea and refreshments were serving round by a servant, who looked as wise, and literary as the rest of the party.

My celebrated hostess rose to receive me from her ponderous chair, which formed the centre of her circle, with as much graciousness and cordiality as can well be conceived. Every look was a welcome, every word an eulogium, and every tone as musical and as modulated as the most fastidious ear could desire. But oh! Sylphs, nymphs, and Muses, and you, bright image of my youthful dreams, young, elegant, and amiable, Helen Maria Williams, did I at last find you in the bulky, formless, and faded

old lady, who now stood before me ! Although I ought to have expected this, I was not prepared for it. In spite of Mrs. Le Fanu's letters, written years before, I had not got a step farther than Bozzy's description : and when the high bred Miss Williams handed me, with true French ceremony, to the *bergère* at her right, and thus incorporated me with the learned ladies of her society, it required some minutes to recover from the shock of my disappointment. My frippery appearance, too, was such an anomaly in this demure and sober circle. What I would have given for a *douillette bien ouatée*, or a coal-box bonnet to cover my bare head ; (the identical head with which I had appeared at Lady Cork's a few years before, and which I have worn, for divers reasons of convenience and economy, down to this very winter, 1828, when I find it more decent, though not quite so economical, to shelter it under the shade of a hat or a *beret*, *afin de prendre mon parti*). Let me add, that it is easier to take arms against twenty Popes, and Emperors of Austria, and stand the attacks of fifty Quarterlies, with the new reinforcement of Mr. L—— to boot, than to stare the

first symptom of a furrow in the face, and announce such an epoch without shrinking: thus then I fairly announce myself to be no longer what the *Journal des Débats* once so pleasantly called me, “*Cette jeune dame, qui a été jeune si long-tems.*”*

As neither wit, learning, nor age, exempts a French woman from the interests of the *toilette*, (and Madame Dacier herself was, I have no doubt, a *petite maîtresse*,) we had scarcely warmed into intimacy over the subject of Madame de Staël’s new work on the Revolution (which, by the by, drew forth some very entertaining and characteristic anecdotes of that lady’s recent residence in Paris, and her admiration for the Emperor of Russia, and the Duke of Wellington), when one of the ladies complimented me on my dress; it was said to be *à la rigueur*, for the season, and supposed to be from the *fabrique* of Le Roi. When I said that I made all my own dresses myself, exclamations from all sides poured in! Did ever any body make a dress, that did not serve her time to the mysteries of the craft;

* “That young lady who has been so long young.”

but, above all, a literary lady—an authoress—a *femme savante*, working at the needle! I soon set them right as to my learning, by the assurance, that, except a very little bog Latin picked up from a hedge schoolmaster in the wilds of Ireland, I knew nothing of any learning whatever; that my authorship had originated in dire necessity; that being obliged to read and write books for many hours per day, I never talked of them; and that above all, “*Mon métier à moi, c’était d’être femme;*” and so the conversation took a very *enjouée* turn.

The amiable protestant Pope, and others of the gentlemen, enlarged our circle; and the hours passed away so lightly, that it was late when I left the dim rooms and clever circle of Helen Maria Williams, for the splendid and brilliant salon of our ex-Irish lady lieutenant, in the Faubourg St. Honoré, (by the by, one of the few vice-queens who have left behind them an indelible remembrance of virtues, that threw a lustre upon her high position, and of accomplishments that render it the fashion to be gifted, even in that land, where talent is but another word for proscription!) I cannot better close these recollec-

tions of my acquaintance with Miss Williams, than by giving one, or two, of the many notes with which she honoured me, as being extremely illustrative of a certain pretty tone of *cajolerie*, which always flattered its object, without degrading the writer. “*Vous me flattez, coquin, mais n’importe ; flattez toujours.*”*

“What poetical fictions did I indulge myself in, when I believed all Lady Morgan’s kind promises, repeated with all her graces and enchantments, of returning soon to the *Rue de Bondi*. I feel quite disposed to *boulder* ; and yet Lady Morgan can instantly make her peace with me, by consenting to come with Sir Charles on Sunday next. I shall be extremely flattered, if I am not refused. *Milles tendres compliments.*

“H. M. WILLIAMS.”

“*Thursday, Rue de Bondi.*”

“Miss H. M. Williams, lest she should not be so fortunate as to find Lady Morgan at home,

* “You flatter me ; but no matter, always flatter.”

writes this note to express her regret, and almost even to *complain* that her ladyship has only found time to bestow upon her one transient visit, since her arrival at Paris. Lady Morgan is not one of those passing travellers, whom having seen once, one can easily be resigned to see no more. H. M. W. is therefore extremely flattered to hear from her friend Mr. Warden, that Lady Morgan had expressed something like a kind purpose of returning. Will she do H. M. W. the honour of passing an hour with her on Sunday evening next, with Sir Charles, to whom she begs her particular compliments. H. M. W. wishes it the more, as she expects a friend on Sunday, who has the greatest desire to be presented to Lady Morgan, whom he has long admired at a distance."

"Friday, July 5th, Rue de Bondi."

Oh ! dear ! I am ready to *pamer* over this allusion to my "graces and enchantments," after being called an Irish she wolf, in Blackwood's, and indexed in the Quarterly for "my unwomanly brutality." Since I wrote the above, in great *gaieté de cœur*, I received a letter from a mutual friend of

Miss Williams and myself, inclosing the following paragraph from a French paper.

“ DEATH OF HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS.

“ We ought to devote a few lines to the memory of a literary lady, whose name is dear to the friends of public liberty. Mrs. Helen Maria Williams, the author of a vast number of political and poetical works, lately died at Paris, after a long illness. This lady left England for France, to assist in the important events of the Revolution. Since 1790, she has constantly resided at Paris. She contracted an intimate acquaintance with the most ardent and most disinterested patriots. She was the friend of Madame Roland, and the Girondins. Since that period, she has related the different events of our Revolution in a series of works published at London, and which have served to direct the opinion of England and the United States to the facts of the French Revolution. To these literary claims, she joined qualities of mind equally affectionate and intelligent. She was always the patron of the poor; and frequently, in the class of unfortunate literary men, her kindness was ex-

tended to that independent merit, which is ashamed to solicit. She published her ‘*Souvenirs de la Révolution*,’ the analysis of which was suppressed by the Censorship. The last wishes of this distinguished woman were in favour of the heroes who overcame barbarity at Navarin. Her death has plunged her family and numerous friends in the bitterest grief.”—*Constitutionnel*.

NO POPERY.

THE Duchess of Marlborough, when ill of an ague, refused to take the cinchona, because it was called at that time, jesuit’s bark. The clergy at the reformation were wiser, inasmuch as they did not refuse to take the papistical tithes : for all the rest, our no-popery legislators are pretty much on an intellectual par with poor Sarah.

MARTINUS SCRIBLERUS.

THE comparison of logic to matrimony, one of the most diverting passages in Martinus Scriblerus, is copied from the *Nuptiæ Peripateticæ* of Caspar Burlæus.

EXERCISE.

“WHEN I consider the physical structure of man,” said Frederick the Great, “it appears to me, as if nature had formed us rather to be postilions, than sedentary men of letters.” There is some exaggeration in this. We hear a good deal of the diseases of literary men, because literary men are most interested in their own afflictions; and they hold the pen in their own hands; but the diseases peculiar to excessive exertion are not less numerous, nor severe, than those of excessive repose. Besides, half the so called desk diseases

arise from the combination of excessive nourishment, with sedentary habits. Like all other machines, the human frame wears out the most rapidly, in those parts, where there is the greatest friction and strain. Continued exercise of the brain is very exhausting, and occasions a demand for nourishment and for stimulation, greater than is consonant with health. Most literary men are *tant soit peu gourmands*; and they pay the penalty of their indulgence the more, because they neglect a regular and gentle exercise. That nature did not intend us for postilions, is evident in the abridged lives, and diseased, deformed, and premature old age of the working population.

BOMBAZEEN.

THIS article of dress should be written bombycine. It is a texture of worsted and of silk, the latter substance being the produce of the animal termed bombyx.

LAW.

TRUTH is the last object of legal research. Under most arbitrary governments, the law seems calculated to condemn the innocent : so anxious are the lawgivers to prevent the escape of the guilty. The English criminal procedure appears as directly aimed at screening offenders, under a false notion of protecting the innocent. Which is the most mischievous, it would be difficult to determine. The great object of investigating the truth, at once protects the public, and the lawful interests of individuals ; while the business of the advocate is professedly to serve his client to the uttermost, and to lay aside all considerations of justice in his favour. In this he far exceeds the egotism of the parties themselves, who, if they pleaded their own cause, would be checked in their misrepresentations and quibbles, by some sense of shame, by some fear of the prejudice which detected falsehood would excite against them. Whereas the lawyer glories in his

sophistical ingenuity ; and if baffled in his effort, bears the whole blame for the bad spirit in which he has acted. Thus it happens most frequently that we do not try the accused, but the indictment; the overt act is lost in the accidents ; the innocent are acquitted without the re-establishment of character, and the guilty are let loose, to renew their aggressions on society. Yet the law is the perfection of human reason !!

RICHES.

LA Bruyère observes, “ *Il se croit des talens et de l'esprit ; il est riche.*” This is the counter error to that of men of merit who complain that they have not attained wealth. The acquisition of large fortunes, in as far as it is not altogether a matter of accident, requires the exercise of far other faculties than wit and intellect : and it would be as reasonable to complain that this species of merit will not ensure health, as that it will not procure money.

TRUTH.

THE love which most men have for truth, arises from the desire to make their own falsehood available. If falsehood were general in society, no man would be believed, and deceit would be impossible. It was a keen remark, that Fielding has, I believe, placed in the mouth of Jonathan Wild, that a lie is too precious a thing to be wasted. Truth is the first interest of society ; more harm is done by falsehood in an hour, than by violence in a year : yet have all nations paid dearly for establishments, calculated for the express purpose of confining inquiry in one exclusive direction, and shutting out all other avenues of light but their own.

WOMAN'S LOVE.

WHAT a gift, or rather what a fatal necessity is the temperament which leads to the living out of one's self, and becoming bound up in the existence of another, over whose will, passions, and conduct, one has no controul ! This faculty of devotedness is, I suspect, peculiar to females. It is quite possible that a woman, to whom honour and reputation are dearer than life, should risk them a thousand times for the man she loves (particularly if he be her husband), to save his life and honour. The attachment of a man, however strong and tender, would not reach this. We women love the person beyond all abstract principle ; and the error (for it is an error in morals) is seated in the organization which makes us wives and mothers. Men love principles, and even prejudices, more than the persons they love best ; that is, they love themselves

best of all, and love themselves in that point of honour on which the world's opinion depends.

“ I could not love thee, dear, so well,
Loved I not honour more.”

Ah ! this “ *honour more* !”

Every woman has not the “ *cœur aimant*” of Julie : women of gallantry never,—coquettes and prudes rarely. Still, woman may be defined a loving animal, and *tant pis pour elle*.

MALTHUS.

COBBETT and the Irish reformers look with detestation on Malthus and his doctrines : and many “ right thinking ” persons, as they call themselves, fancy that they have discovered a valuable ally in him. The same error is common to both. If Malthus's position be true, (and no naturalist can doubt it,) it follows as a matter of demonstration, that there is a greater necessity for political freedom.

The greater the obstacles nature opposes to man's comfortable existence, the greater efforts are required to overcome them, and the greater is the necessity that all his powers should be developed to the uttermost. Hitherto the animal has been fully equal to the task of self-subsistence, wherever bad governments have not interfered with the natural distribution of the products of industry, and quartered noble indigence upon plebeian activity. Civilization confers an increased power over the elements, and a corresponding facility in manufacturing food; but unjust governments weigh down the labourer, and avail themselves of every improvement to increase the lion's share of the product. Malthus, properly understood, is a powerful radical reformer.

PATERNAL BENEDICTIONS.

MADAME DE GENLIS regrets the abandonment of the nightly ceremony of paternal benedictions (*Dict. des Etiquettes*). The mere repetition, however, must destroy any efficacy it might be supposed to possess, in forcing good conduct. A benediction is at first valued as a reward of virtue, or a symbol of pardon for repented error: but it inevitably becomes a thing of course; and is desired for its own sake alone, or as a pledge of the favourable prepossession of a doating old man who has something to leave.

If a benediction be supposed to possess efficacy in procuring good to its object, so also must a curse be potent in evil; and by the prevalence of this notion, the delirious ravings of disappointed ambition may become the cause of misery to the innocent. Thus considered, the benediction enters into the category of spells and enchantments; and the formulary once recited, the omnipotence of

heaven is enchained to the performance of its conditions. This is a most degrading superstition; and, like all similar errors, it cannot in the long run be serviceable to the species. Its obvious ill effect is to make the will of others, and not the morality of things, the standard of action.

SENTIMENT.

SENTIMENT is at best an invention of vanity to mask the infirmities of mind and body: no wonder that it so easily lapses into affectation. Joseph Surface is but a cynical display of what passes in the mind of the great majority of the species; and of what the hypocrite is as anxious to hide from himself as from the rest of the world. Marriage is the grave of sentimentality; because the parties are like Cicero's Augurs; they cannot carry on the farce, and keep their countenance.

PRESENTS.

THE great are fond of presents ; but they are superlatively ungrateful. Little people, in their need of protection, instinctively apply to the great, with a bribe in their hand : and they do so wisely. Flattered self-love yields what justice or benevolence alone might deny. It is, however, by a succession of trifling gifts that the experienced toad-eater makes way with a patron. Women (*par parcnthèse*) enter into the details of toad-eating much better than men.

An ignoramus offers something valuable, something above his means to afford ; and he “ takes nothing by the motion ;” for neither money, nor money’s worth is valued by those whose wants are supplied as soon as they arise. Such persons receive without compunction or consideration ; and are neither obliged, nor disposed to return in kind. It is courtesy, and not pecuniary value they want ; and

it enters not into their conception that the value, which is nothing to them, may be an inconvenient sacrifice to the donor. Valuable presents must be rare ; while it is unceasing homage that wins. The spooneys alone are taken in, and strive to astonish by the splendour of their gifts. The “able-bodied” toadies “win with honest trifles to betray to deepest consequences.”

Kings, however, like substantial presents ; but they will take anything, even from the poorest of their subjects. When George the Third went to return thanksgivings at St. Paul’s, on the recovery of his health, a picture was made by Dayes of the ceremony in the interior of the church. This picture was bought by an engraver, and a print executed from it ; and an application was made for the king’s permission to dedicate the work to him. The permission was graciously granted by that patron of the arts ; with a stipulation that the original picture should be consigned to himself : a proposition with which the spirited engraver refused to comply.

Courtiers laud the liberality of kings ; and, in the eyes of poets laureate, regal munificence is the first

of virtues : but a present-taking king is less mischievous than he, whom a silly vanity and ignorance of the value of money, betrays into wasting the treasure which is not his own. Besides, a greedy monarch is further excusable, inasmuch as the cupidity of those who surround him, may be supposed to give an intelligible lesson : he has only to profit by the example.

PER CONTRA.

IF the great are fond of presents, the little make their gifts in the same spirit, in which the farmer commits the seed to the earth. M——, in reading Lucian this morning at breakfast, hit upon this curious question : whether, on occasion of some general assembly of the gods, the divinities should take precedence according to the respective value of their materials, as images, or according to the merit of their sculpture. The more weighty consideration very properly carried the day ; for the

gods, both of this world and the other, are honoured only as they have something to bestow. The reverence for mere wealth, which is the besetting sin of the English character, is a sad mark of moral degradation; but it is at least wiser than a stupid admiration of the oppressors and destroyers of mankind, or an adoration of titles, ribbons, and the accident of noble birth. It is a mistake to suppose that the homage paid to riches is an homage to the folly or roguery of the possessor: it is to his merit and utility as a conduit pipe, for distributing that, of which every one is desirous, that the worship is offered. The honours paid to mere aristocracy are like a pompous inscription over a dry pump; compared with which, Rothschildolatry is a return to simple nature.

EDUCATION.

THE great error of all systems of education is, that they are systems ;—schemes built upon moral theories, instead of developments of physiological facts ; they are the result of a neglect of elements which are indestructible, in the attempt to establish doctrines which are hypothetical. Even Pestalozzi's system has this radical defect. His doctrine of “ *la foi et l'amour*,” which he has taken for its basis, or “ that which children feel for their parents,” is to me unintelligible ; for schoolmasters are not, and cannot be, parents ; and his rejection of emulation, as a germ of dangerous passions,* is utterly unphilosophical. Until Nature ceases to give passions, man must use them. The lever of all action is motive

* He calls ambition “ *la queue de Bonaparte*.”

TEMPERAMENT.

ALL character, and much of conduct, is a mere affair of temperament. Early association will do something in forming opinions; precepts may modify, and example influence; but nothing will give sensibility, where nature has denied it. Something may be effected by the friend or the physician; and caution and calomel may tell, in the long run. Nero, perhaps, might have been bled down to a maudlin methodist; but returning health would have raised him to the zeal of a St. Dominick; and on a perfect convalescence, he would have ceased to cant, and began to burn. In General Count P. de Ségur's beautiful work, in which the story of a campaign is given, with all the charm of a romance, and all the dignity of an epic, the author accounts for the Russian war, and the headlong precipitation with which it was conducted, on the simple principle of a latent malady

“in the world’s great master,” which sharpened his passions, and urged him to his ruin; “an acrid humour which reigned in his blood, which he considered as the cause of his irascibility, but without which,” said Napoleon himself, “there is no gaining battles.” “Which of us,” adds the author, “has penetrated sufficiently into the human organization to affirm, that this hidden vice was not one of the causes of that restless activity, which hurried on events, and occasioned at once his grandeur and his fall?”

How these French soldiers write! Bred in the “tented field,” where have they acquired the style so finely fitted to their subject, and the philosophy that belongs to their age? Who are the historians of the last thirty years, of the greatest events that ever shook the governments of the earth to their centre?—not the “*hommes de lettres*” of France,—not her *académiciens*,—nor her ex-ministers and statesmen, “*rompus et corrompus*,”—nor her professed authors;—they are the gallant soldiers who witnessed the events they so eloquently describe, and who call on cotemporary testimony to corroborate their statements. Ségur,

Rovigo, Foi, Rapp, Dumas, Montholon, De Rocca, &c. &c.—these are the historiographers of modern France, and well worth Racine, and all the other bland and laudatory chroniclers of church and state, who wrote under the *surveillance* of the Maintenons, the Montespons, and their complaisant ministers, or influential valets and *femmes de chambre*.

INFANT BAPTISM.

MANY suppose that the practice of infant baptism is derived from a Hebrew rite; but the oriental christians, by whom baptism was first adopted, confined that ceremony to adults. It seems probable that the modern usage was introduced into the western church, in imitation of the lustration of the Romans; a ceremony performed, according to Macrobius, on the ninth day after birth with males, and on the eighth with females.*

* Saturnalia, I. 16.

LOGIC OF FINE WRITERS.

“Chateaubriand, speaking of the variety and extent of modern discoveries, observes “*Le Génie de l’homme est véritablement trop grand pour sa petite habitation ; il faut en conclure qu’il est destiné à une plus haute demeure.*”*

Voyage en Italie et en Amérique.

THIS is a good specimen of the logic of “fine writing,” “plenty of eloquence, and little wisdom.” What a sweeping conclusion from one little word (*trop*)! Man is *too* great for this world, and therefore he belongs to another! Never was an oratorical exaggeration worse applied. Amidst all the magnificent results of human ingenuity, which have thus powerfully excited the susceptible imagination of the French academician, want, and disease, and ignorance, are still the especial characteristics of the species. No where are the essentials of good government generally understood; still less so the art of maintaining public liberty, when once ac-

* “The genius of man is too great for his little habitation; we must, then, conclude that he is destined to a more elevated existence.”

quired. No where is morality independent of the executioner,—no where is life maintained by the great bulk of the community at a less expence, than that of constant unremitting labour. Look at that half-starved moving mass of rags, by courtesy called an Irish peasant; reflect upon his helpless incapacity, his physical destitution, his moral annihilation! Yet is he the subject of an empire, in which all the powers of the species are carried to the highest point of development, to which man has ever reached. Might we not equally conclude, from this spectacle, that the human animal is so ill adapted to his mundane existence, that he must be intended for another? Stripped of all exaggeration, the adaptation of our intellectual powers to our necessities, though exceedingly imperfect, is still abundantly sufficient to carry conviction, that the earth is the sojourn of man's especial destiny: whether, with Chateaubriand, we are to jump to a conclusion, and say, "*therefore* he is destined to no other," I leave to the consideration of those who have no better argument for determining their faith.

PHILOSOPHY.

“ Donner à l’oubli le passé,
 Le présent à l’indifférence,
 Et, pour vivre débarrassé,
 L’avenir à la Providence.”*

WHAT excellent advice, if it were in every one’s power to adopt it : but the colour of a man’s philosophy is, after all, no more at his own disposal, than the colour of his eyebrows. Both depend upon the same cause, the temperament of the subject. The stoics and the epicureans have been thought to differ only in words ; and, as far as mere reason is concerned, an accurate definition would force agreement between them. But till the stoic can be cured of his bile, and his habitually uneasy sensations, or the constitutional in-

* “ Give the past to oblivion, the present to indifference ; and, to live exempt from all care, leave the future to Providence.”

dolence of the epicurean can be broken down by disease and misfortunes, a real unity of sentiment is impossible. There is nothing, concerning which a man is more positive than his own sensations : and these determine the point of view from which every one regards the nature of things. The same landscape is before us all : but we see it through Claude Lorraine glasses—one man *couleur de rose*, another *du plus beau noir* : and then we fall to quarrel, like the knights, concerning the gold and silver shield ! It is nearly the same thing with religion.

CORREGGIO AND JOHANNA OF PLACENTIA.

WHEN I was at Parma (1820) the cognoscenti of the place were still talking of the wonderful discovery of the “*piu insigne pitture*” of the great Antonio Allegri detto il Correggio, which, after the lapse of nearly three centuries, had been found to exist in the monastery of St. Paul, belonging to the Benedictine sisters. The authenticity of the paintings, and the certainty of their immortal author, were questions long set at rest. But nothing grows old in Italy, and every thing in which the arts are concerned serves as a thesis of disputation, to those ardent but suppressed minds, to which all subjects of discussion are forbidden, save such as have no intimate connexion with human interests and human happiness. While the empty shops and silent streets of Parma exhibit the hopeless and torpid uncertainty of its pauper inhabi-

tants (a city once the mart of bustling commerce), it is not unusual to see learned disputants holding forth, with great zeal and energy, on the merits of some rival "*maestro*," or disputing the date or authenticity of some picture of Mazzuolo, or Corregio, as if the emancipation of wretched Italy, from the Austrian tyranny, depended upon the settling of the question.

I was one morning whiling away a listless half-hour, previous to our departure, in the noble church of San Giovanni Evangelista, from whose aisles the fume of the morning service was not yet dispersed, when I was attracted by the loud voices (loud for such a place) of two persons, who were arguing with violent gesticulations before the splendid picture of St. Paul destroying the statue of Diana of Ephesus. The one was in a laical dress, but covered with the dust of the closet; there was no mistaking him; he was evidently a professor of *virtù*. The other was in the monkish habit of St. Benedict. The virtuoso seemed anxious to prove that Diana of Ephesus was a certain Giovanna di Piacenza, abbess of the neighbouring convent of Benedictines, two cen-

turies back, and the patroness of Corregio's early efforts. The other (the monk) was denying the allegory insinuated by the lay virtuoso — that Jane of Placentia had been persecuted for her too liberal spirit, or that the mysterious fresco, discovered in the long closed chamber of the neighbouring convent, could have been painted as a fit subject for the chaste nuns of St. Paul, and their holy mother to gaze on. The apartment so painted, he insisted, had originally made a part of the palace of a Parmesan noble,—and, with other neighbouring houses, had been gradually annexed to the monastery, during the last century, when the community had become too numerous for the original building.

I could not stop to hear the argument out, as we were on the point of starting for Bologna, and our carriage was literally in waiting. But I left the porch of San Giovanni Evangelista with my imagination so full of Giovanna of Piacenza, abbess of the monastery of St. Paul, of whom the lay virtuoso had let drop some curious anecdotes, that long before we had reached Modena, I had made her character and patronage of the arts, the

subject of an Italian romance; giving it all the colouring of the scenery through which I was passing—and taking down particulars, features, and sites between Parma and Reggio (the birth-place of her immortal protégé), which, in my veteran knowledge of novel writing, I knew would *work up* well.

At Bologna, where we remained much longer than we intended, and where we lived much with the learned and the ingenious, I could only learn of my interesting abbess, that she was a “*grande dame de par l’église* ;” but the forty languages of Mezzofanti, and the profound erudition of the excellent Costa, could tell me nothing more. Santa Caterina, too, was just then beginning to roll her eyes in the church of “Our Ladies of St. Catherine,” at Bologna; and she so occupied public attention, that it was impossible to extort a word on the subject of any other saint in the calendar. Still, as often as I sat listening to Crescentini singing his delicious cavatina, in the frescoed *salone* of the beautiful Martinetti, the idea of my Jane of Placentia came upon my mind; for whatever I have best conceived (and even medio-

crity has its degree of excellence); whatever I have written most successfully, has all been done under the influence of music; the whole of *Salvator Rosa* was composed (and composed *à trait de plume*) in my drawing-room, in Dublin, while listening to the master-compositions of Rossini.

It was at Florence I first obtained more precise information concerning my charming abbess; for charming I was determined she should be. During our delightful residence in that pleasantest of all Italian cities, I had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of Signior Giuseppe Michali, whose very erudite work, “*L'Italia avanti il dominio dei Romani*,” is a monument of learned industry. The true Italian feeling of this gentleman had led him to devote his time and attention not only to the subjects connected with the ancient glories of the country, but to whatever illustrates those divine arts of which it is the mother. At the very time of my making his acquaintance, he was occupied with the subject that had got hold of my imagination; and his account of the long-concealed and celebrated abbess is as follows:—

A vague tradition that there existed, in the mo-

nastery of the Benedictine sisters, at Parma, a chamber painted in fresco, by the immortal Corregio, had got gradually into public circulation. At first it was deemed to be nothing more than the malicious gossip of some neighbouring convents, which represented the fresco as a most unholy exhibition, reflecting on the memory of a certain abbess, who flourished in the sixteenth century, and whose history had been traditionally preserved in the district over which she had exercised considerable sway. The fresco chamber had remained shut up for nearly two hundred and eighty years: or, if open to the nuns, its splendid pictures were but ill appreciated by the victims of bigotry, whose suppressed sensibility left them incapable or unwilling to receive those fine impressions which the works of genius are sure to impart to the cultivated and tasteful.

By degrees, however, this painted chamber began to excite the attention of the curious; and, at an epoch when the works of Corregio had reached their highest estimation, the celebrated Mengs, with some difficulty, obtained permission to visit the interior of the convent, a

sanctuary usually closed against “unblessed soles.” In 1780, he published a letter on the subject, declaring the frescoes to be amongst those *capi d'opera* of Corregio which had secured his immortality. To this opinion Antonio Bresciani, professor in the academy of Parma, and Batti, of Geneva, who had obtained a similar permission, bore ample testimony. But when the posthumous works of Mengs appeared, all reference to the frescoes was omitted in the pages devoted to an analysis of the works of the painter of the Graces.

The world of *virtù* was again thrown into a vortex of doubt; and one must have lived in Italy, and seen how bad institutions can confine the mind to trivial subjects, to understand the commotion into which a whole community can be thrown by such a doubt.

Tiraboschi came forward on behalf of Corregio, to claim those splendid works, (of which the Italian public heard so much and had seen so little) as new triumphs of his genius. He endeavoured to reconcile the silence of Mengs with the declarations of Bresciani and Batti, by supposing that the former had not spoken of the frescoes, because he

had found them in a state of decay and partial obliteration. Signior Michali, with more probability, supposes that the silence of Mengs arose from the melancholy event of his death, which occurred immediately on his return from Parma to Rome, and which might have prevented those additions to his simple notices of the frescoes of St. Paul, which would have set the question at rest. But the question, so important to half the academicians and all the virtuosi of Italy, was not set at rest until the summer of 1795, when a commission of four artists of eminence was formed to visit the convent, with permission of the order, and to examine the frescoes, and pronounce a judgment by which the world of taste was resolved to abide.

From the judgment of the commission of artists there was no appeal—the frescoes were assigned to Correggio. But their subjects—the most profane though eminently classical subjects,—who had chosen them? Vasari declared that Correggio had never studied at Rome—that he was ignorant of the sublime models furnished by the genius of antiquity! and that the humble and unfortunate

disciple of the dry school of the rude Mantegna, drew his first and only inspiration from the sight of that work of Raphael, which extorted the celebrated exclamation of "*E sono pittore anche io!*" Still the works of Albano are not more classical, more poetically ideal, and more purely modelled on the antique, than those frescoes painted by Corregio in his early youth, which were doomed to the oblivion of two hundred and eighty years. There is one of the subjects, more particularly, which appeared to have been more freshly drawn, from the pages of Homer. It represents a female suspended by a cord, her arms tied above her head, and two anvils of gold hung from her feet. This was the punishment inflicted by Jupiter on Juno in the presence of all the gods.

It was thought that some *arrière pensée* lurked in this representation of the summary punishment inflicted by the old church of the antique world upon its refractory daughters, and that it was meant to hit on the severity with which the rebellious mothers of the Christian church, the powerful abbesses of the fifteenth century, were occasionally treated by the Jupiter of the Vatican. All the subjects of these

pictures, indeed, were so at variance with those usually selected by Corregio, or deemed admissible into such holy retreats as the convent of St. Paul's, that the whole appeared an inexplicable mystery. The laborious efforts of Italian *virtù*, however, at last discovered that the inspirer of the young and ardent Corregio was Giovanna of Piacenza, whose early encouragement and direction of a genius vainly struggling against penury, identified her name with the history of the arts, and probably gave to Italy the most brilliant of her artists.

At the period alluded to, the abbesses of the great and highly endowed Italian monasteries were powerful princesses of the church, commensurate in wealth and influence with the great lords of the conclave themselves. Chosen for life, they not only administered the immense revenues of their convent uncontrolled, but lived with a splendour and luxury, which occasionally degenerated into absolute licentiousness and boundless extravagance. The spiritual authority with which they were endowed, the jurisdiction they possessed over the persons submitted to their rule, extending even to

life and death, the many privileges they received during the fifteenth and sixteenth century, enabled them to take part in all the political factions and civil feuds of the day, and to decide the most important contests ; though, like true women, they often attached themselves to the least powerful party, and abandoned the magnificence of their convent to share the exile of their friends and partizans. Enjoying the greatest credit, by the talents, graces, and high birth which led to their monastic elevation, making head against their bishops, in the struggle for jurisdiction, resisting all attempts to subject them *à la clôture*, availing themselves of the sanction of the convent, yet participating in all the pleasures and passions of society, courting fame, and alive to glory, they sought to illustrate their conventual reign by such enterprises as were calculated to give their names to posterity.

Among these priestesses of Catholicism, Giovanna di Piacenza was conspicuous for taste, talent, and magnificence. Elected in the flower of her youth and beauty to the abbess's chair at Parma, she began her reign by erecting a sanctuary, worthy of Cnidus, among the rude cloisters of her

monastic seclusion. For the purpose of decorating an apartment dedicated to her own exclusive use, and intended as a monument of her refined taste and patronage of the arts, she invited some of the most distinguished artists of Parma and Modena, but she chose the young and obscure Antonio Allegri of Reggio, called *Il Corregio*; and she herself selected those subjects which he so beautifully executed, and which were copied or imitated from the antique.

Here were no fearful exhibitions of human suffering, “for the love of God,”—no martyrs broiled,—no saints agonized. Sacrifices indeed there were; but they were innoxious sacrifices offered by young and beautiful priestesses on the altars of Jupiter and Vesta.

Had the accomplished abbess confined the gratification of her tastes to such representations of classical imagery, she might have been pardoned. But she had borrowed more from the ancients than their tastes or their arts;—she had drawn from their pages their love of liberty and noble independence; and she had long resisted the attempts of the bishops and pope to interfere with her jurisdiction.

After a long and noble struggle against the encroachment of the church tyranny, she fell a victim to its resistless power. Her convent was cloistered, and cut off from all human intercourse; and she survived her living entombment but a short time. Her favourite apartment, the monument of her taste, her learning, and her liberality, closed hermetically, even against the sisters of the order, was at last forgotten. The oblivion of near three centuries, concealed from the study and admiration of successive generations those *chefs-d'œuvre* which the enterprize of modern *virtù* finally discovered, for the benefit of a declining art, that had long ceased to produce a Corregio.

While I resided at Rome, my head was still running on "Giovanna of Piacenza,"—when two other subjects fell in my way, (for my work on Italy wrote itself); one of these was Salvator Rosa, not as I have since given it to the public, but as an Italian romance. The idea came into my head as I was sauntering with Cardinal Fesch through the sumptuous rooms of his superb palace, just after we had been looking at one of Salvator's pictures. On my return home I sketched out the first chapter

of my romance ; but the genius, character, and literary works of Salvator grew into such importance in my mind, “ his times ” appeared so full of interest, that I threw aside my romance, and produced his life, one of the most successful of all my trifling works.

Still, in the repertory of my imagination lay my Abbess of Parma, until at last I found a niche for her, in “ the O'Briens and O'Flahertys,” where something of her character, and a literal description of her apartment, in the monastery of St. Paul, is given ; and there she figures away as the Abbess of Moy Cullen.—“ *Au reste*,” all that is said in that novel of the foundress of the “ holy heart,” is historically true : a young, clever, and wealthy *religieuse*, acting by the agency of the Jesuits, did found that mystic worship, which is still throughout Catholic Europe a sign and a focus of jesuitism.

THE CAP OF LIBERTY.

THE cap of liberty, which still adorned the milestones near the French capital, in 1813, and which were to have been effaced, in order to make way for Napoleon's eagle, were supplanted at the restoration by the *fleur de lis*. This is the history of the French revolution in a single sentence.

Among the Romans, the presentation of a cap was part of the ceremony observed in the manumission of slaves, and, therefore, perhaps, it was adopted as an emblem of freedom. The custom is still preserved at the investiture of a doctor in the university graduations. The circumstance gives a strong meaning to a whimsical speech of Sir R. St. G., who, at the celebrated Catholic dinner at the Black Abbey, at Kilkenny, got very tipsy. During the process he had made several efforts to be as eloquent as his neighbours, but was coughed

down as often as he got on his legs. In all the sulkiness of a fuddled man, he resolved to go away ; but he discovered that his hat had gone before him, and suddenly finding a pause and a subject for his oratory, he exclaimed, “ Gentlemen, I came here to emancipate you, and, d—n you, you have stolen my hat.”

A propos to university graduations : when the present Duke of Gloucester took his degree, his father, who was at Cambridge to witness the ceremony, was also complimented with an honorary doctorate. The opportunity was seized upon by the professors to bring into the speeches (in which they introduce their *children*, the new graduates) an appropriate compliment to their illustrious guest. Of this the royal visitor was duly warned ; and as it was supposed that he might not have recently “ rubbed up his Latin,” as Queen Elizabeth phrased it, he was directed to be upon the alert, and whenever he caught the word “ *principes*,” to infer a compliment and bow accordingly. With the professors of divinity and of law, things passed as had been pre-arranged, but Sir I. P., the Professor of Physic, was “ ill at

these numbers," and too indolent to compose a speech especially for the occasion ; so away he went with the old humdrum string of common-places, touching the rise, progress, dignity, and importance of the art of honestly committing manslaughter : he had not, however, travelled far, before he arrived at a sentence beginning with " Hippocrates et Galen, principes medicinæ," and down went the head of the old duke, as if Galen and Hippocrates had belonged to the House of Hanover.

PROVIDENCE.

ARISTOTLE maintained that the barbarians were created expressly to become slaves ;—while La Fiteau, a jesuit, who wrote an history of the aboriginal Americans, believed that none but an atheist would dare to say they were creatures of God's forming. In the same spirit, a modern judge had the assurance to assert that slavery is not contrary to Christianity, because bishops voted for it. Providence is, under all systems, the "*prête-nom*" for the injustices of man.

Madame de Genlis (*Dictionnaire des Etiquettes*) says, "Providence has instilled an irresistible love of the marvellous into the heart of man, in order to predispose him for receiving without difficulty the celestial lights of faith." Unfortunately for the hypothesis, this capital contrivance has been as much at the service of the "devilish darkness" of a thousand-and-one false religions, as of the "celestial lights" of catholicity. If Voltaire had uttered such a sentiment, it would have been said, and with justice, that his object was to bring religion into contempt, and to expose the roguery of priests, who trade upon the weakness of human nature. Men love the marvellous, because they are greedy of strong sensations; and, as this propensity hurries them into false tastes, so it predisposes them to superstition and false creeds. Protestantism has too little of the marvellous for the warm sensibilities of the south; and even Madame de Genlis's popery is not wonderful enough for the good people of Spain and Portugal.

TAKING A SHOWER BATH.

A GREAT senator and statesman of the “Irish nation,” being ordered a shower-bath lately, sent to the physician, who had prescribed the remedy, to know if he might soften the shock by wearing a brazen bason on his head. Oh, Cruikshank! what a subject! Bath, bason, statesman, and all!! And yet this being is a particle of the “collective wisdom” to which the destiny of a great nation is confided. Institutions which provide for human happiness can throw up no barricado to stem the influx of human absurdity: that which is made for man, and by man, is inevitably exposed to the imperfections both of the agent and object of all systems.

VIEWS OF THE CATHOLIC QUESTION.

“ I SUPPOSE, my lord,” said the foreign valet of the Earl of P——, the other day, “ I suppose we shall have the opera and the theatres open in England on Sundays, *comme ailleurs*, if the Catholic Bill passes ?”

“ I have not heard *that*,” replied his lordship, smiling; “ and I should rather think the contrary.”

“ *Diantre*,” replied the French emancipator, grinding his teeth, “ *Eh à quoi bon donc leur émancipation ? qu’est ce que ça fait ?*” *

“ Let me send you some turbot, L——,” said Mr. ——, the other day at dinner, to a well known and respectable Irish catholic barrister.

“ ‘Turbot,’” replied the papist counsellor, coldly, “ O ! I am emancipated—I have done with fish !”

The Irish catholics hate fish; but are rigorous

* “ What, then, is the use of emancipation ?”

observers of fasts, and of all forms and ordinances imposed by a church, to which, as much from a point of honour as of faith, they rigidly submit. How many of the idle forms of church discipline will fall into desuetude, with that feeling of sympathy for the persecuted faith that imposed them ! a feeling which catholic emancipation will cool down, and obliterate.

VIRAGOS.

WOMEN of strong tempers always govern their husbands; women of strong minds influence them. A man's sole refuge against an ill-tempered wife is to run away from her, which he generally does when he can. The influence of a clever woman lies in the power she has of hiding it. Still the virago, I believe, has the best of it: for if the man, in affecting to submit, very frequently only conceals, still he endures. The key to the government of all men is their passions; and after these—but this is shewing up the mystery of the craft;

“ Plague on it, that rogues can't be true to themselves.”

FEMALE PERSEVERANCE.

“ Nous n'avons point de diable, assez diable, pour tenir tête à une méchante femme.”*

La Descente de Mezzeten en Enfers.

WHY are women so much more pertinacious than men? *Voyons un peu!* A woman is like a mastiff; once she seizes on an idea, she never lets go, till she has fairly worried out her end. She has no physical strength; no force of reason comparable with man's; but she has a stronger volition. The toughness of her will is a set-off against the fragility of her means; and she substitutes perseverance for power. Man yields, after a struggle, to her concentrated weakness, because he hates whatever interferes with his enjoyment. Like Falstaff, he loves above all things, “To take mine ease in mine inn;” and to avoid a domestic bore, will

* “There is no devil, sufficiently a devil, to make head against a wicked woman.”

assent to much, even when he does not approve. Man is essentially an epicurean ; and woman, from necessity, a stoic. In public affairs the mere force of volition often supplies the place of talent and resources ; while its absence neutralizes and renders inefficient intellects of the finest and highest quality. To this may be referred much of the success of female intrigue, under the governments which have permitted its operation. It was doubtless to the reiterated attacks of Madame du Barri, that Louis the Fifteenth yielded, when he abandoned the most estimable and enlightened of his ministers, *De Choiseul* ; and a similar obstinacy in the unfortunate *Marie Antoinette* goaded her reluctant husband into that course of duplicity and vacillation, which brought them both to a scaffold

OPINION.

INTOLERANCE is the offspring of conceit: we push an opinion, because it is our own, and resent contradiction as a personal insult. Very few persons, however, have any lawful right of property in their own ideas. The greatest number of our opinions are corporate, and belong to the age and country in which we happen to be born. No inconsiderable quantity belong to that venerable and respectable personage, our old nurse. Even the few notions which strong thinkers develope for themselves, depend very closely on habits of thought, impressed by tutors and parents, modified by external circumstances, equally uncontrollable. If some of our worthy anti-catholic, anti-reforming, corn-trade-fettering aristocrats, could be made sensible of the very vulgar origin of many of their favourite ideas, they would as soon shake hands with a chimney-sweeper as entertain them.

WIVES OF FOOLS.

OH ! ye women, who have the good, or ill luck (*selon*) to be married to fools, attempt not to reason with your dears—expect not to seduce, and despair of persuading. Wit, grace, and understanding, are only influential with men of feeling and intellect: to such arms the sensible and the clever never fail to yield. But the fool “ bears a charmed life.” Remember the maxim of your great law-giver: “ *On ne séduit pas un sot ; on le dompte.*”^{*} A fool is incapable of giving quarter, and unworthy of receiving it. The worst of a fool is not that he *is* a fool, but that he is so self-sufficient and self-conceited ; just as obscure people become burthensome, when they imagine themselves important ; and as those who live out of the world are unmanageable, from a fancy that all the

* “ Fools are not to be seduced ; they must be overpowered.”

world is occupied about them. Foolish husbands are always jealous of their authority, and fearful of being supposed to be ruled; they oppose, for the sake of asserting themselves, even when their inclinations are neutral: and once launched into an opposition, they persevere, in spite of conviction, because it does not become their dignity to be less wise than a woman.

LES ROCHERS DE MAD. DE SÉVIGNÉ.

“ Travellers ne’er did lie, though fools at home condemn them.”

SHAKSPEARE.

It is no longer possible to exclaim with Madame de Sévigné, “ c’est une chose étrange, que les grands voyages !” *Les grands voyages*, on the contrary, have become the most common and everyday events of life ! A “ good traveller” has ceased to be “ something at the latter end of a dinner,” as La Feu has it : and to talk of the “ Pyrenean and the river Po,” would now incur for the prosing delinquent the character of a bore, and the penalty of being once heard and ever after avoided. Travelling, even to “ Judah’s barren sands,” is no longer a distinction ; and the Traveller’s Club has so completely become every body’s club, that it has been proposed, by way of something really exclusive, to start a *crocchio ristretto* of those who

have never travelled at all. To talk of a visit to Paris is as cockney as to prate of the lakes of Cumberland or to cite their poets; to boast of having seen the Pope *pontificate*, is as pure a John-Gilpinism, as to chatter of Fonthill; and to have “swum in a gondola” is no more thought of, God save the mark! than a voyage in the Richmond steamer. The Pacific Ocean and the British Channel have become subjects equally commonplace; and if another Peyrouse should disappear from the world, it is odds but he would be picked up in a month by some wandering dandy from Bond-street, or discovered on an *uninhabited island* by a roving detachment from the Yacht Club.

“How came you to alter your route last year? I thought to have met you at Thebes!”

“Oh! I changed my mind, on hearing that half Bloomsbury were there before me; and so cut off for the North Pole with Parry.”

“Did you meet any one there one knows?”

“No, that’s the charm of it. White bears excepted, one has the place to one’s self. Whom did you have, by the by, at Athens last year?”

“Scarcely a soul; at least, scarcely a soul

‘above buttons.’ There were a few third-rate English and first-rate Irish to be seen, sauntering about the Acropolis, and making *goutés* in the Parthenon ; but *pas âme qui vive*—that one ever heard of before. The A.’s pushed on for the Pyramids, the B.’s have been some time settled on the brow of Mount Caucasus, C. left us in the spring for the Crimea, and D. joined his eternal Pylades at Ispahan.”

“At Ispahan ! what a fellow that D. is, with his eternal pretensions to taste ! Go to Ispahan ! when one is sick of it, and its Hajji Babas of Bond-street, and all that sort of thing. No one turns his horse’s head to the South now, unless indeed it were in search of the *terra incognita*. It is the merest *pont aux ânes*. One’s very tailor passes his *vacances* at Smyrna (where mine, by the by, picked up some charming cachemirs, to make cool coats for next winter) ; and you know the old story of Lady Lydia’s maid and Monsieur Forbin, and the silk parasol, in the ruins of Thebes. The North, Sir, the North is the only thing now, the Frozen sea, or Kamtschatka, *via* Moscow, that’s

my *carte de voyage* for the next travelling season. Have you seen my Droshka?"

"No; but I have a Britska waiting for me at Petersburg. I am going to join Lord Frederick J——, who has the prettiest thing on the Sea of Azoff, built by Potemkin. Will you be *des nôtres*?"

"With all my heart. Let us rendezvous at Novogorod, embark at Smolensko on the Dnieper, and so proceed by Kerson and the steppes."

"Exactly; and that will bring us within two verstes of Lord F.'s villa."

It is thus that the home-bred youths "prate of their whereabouts." Not only *il n'y a plus de Pyrénées*, but the total annihilation of time and place seems to have realized the poet's rant, and to have turned the nursery-dream of Peter Wilkins and his flying men to a "flat reality." While British travellers are thus illustrating the "march of mind," by marching off to all parts of the globe, and

"When pleasure begins to grow dull in the East,
Just order their wings and fly off to the West,"

there is a nation which keeps its ground with all that tenacity of a toad on a tile*—a nation which, compared by some to tigers, by others to monkeys, and by Voltaire to both, appears to have been the least understood of any nation on earth. For while the North in hordes come swarming, as of old, over the sunny regions of the South, and while the south seems to change sides, hands across, down the middle and up again, in a cosmopolitical country-dance with the natives of the frozen North, the French, who stand between both, are sure to be always found at home. For one French traveller, of either sex, to be met on the high roads of Europe, one thousand, at least, of any, or every other nation, may be seen scampering from the Tagus to the Neva, and from Thebes to the Giant's Causeway. The French are, in fact, the most grave, sedentary, and immovable people of Europe. Even their women, so falsely accused of vivacity and activity, expend their energies in perpetual movement of mind and muscle. Under the old régime (when the women in France led the

* A friend of mine kept a pet toad in his cellar, and for nine years it never stirred off the tile which it had chosen for its habitation.

lives of the sultanas in the harem, one particular only excepted), all the institutions, both political and social, tended to encourage habits of indolence, in which, in free states, and under happier moral combinations, the sex can never indulge. The very forms and language of high society were borrowed from the inveterate habits of a slavish, idle, and sedentary existence. Did any affliction befall a lady of rank, she forthwith went to bed, to receive the condolence of friends *dans la ruelle*. If she went to drive, it was but to *promener en voiture*; and even in modern Paris, a promenade extends but to a seat in the gardens of the Tuileries, or a chair on the Boulevards.

I had a friend in Paris, some few years ago, who was the most charming and most indolent creature in the world. She was one of the best remains of the old régime of rank and fashion, who had survived the plebeian bustle and democratic activity of the Revolution. Though she had nearly reached her grand climacteric, she was, as she often assured me, still “as active, vivacious, and locomotive as she had been in the flower and bloom of her youth;” and, witty

and indolent as Madame du Deffand herself, she was a finely preserved specimen of a genus, now rapidly disappearing, which philosophy might have contemplated with rapturous curiosity. Madame de — was a perfect impersonation of a lady of fashion of the days of Marie Antoinette. Her *ruelle* was her empire; her *chaise longue* her throne. She took her chocolate, and received visits in bed, during the day; rose late, dined at the hour of the old French *souper*, between eight and nine, and sat up half the night, surrounded by her *habitués*, among whom were to be numbered all the *bel esprit* of Paris.

I was as much with her as my health and our very opposed habits would permit, for she was a perfect study; and I generally left her in the midst of her *media nocte*, in all the vigour of spirits which are vulgarly supposed to belong to the early part of the day. As I made many sacrifices to these habits of indolence, I occasionally required them in turn; and I sometimes succeeded in digging her out of her hotel, where she had for years been niched, motionless as the priestesses of the temples of Pompeii, which modern *virtù* excavates

from their domicile of centuries. I once routed her from her bed at mid-day ; and had her dressed and driving at Longchamp, just as the *beau monde* were turning their horses' heads homeward. I also once produced her, to the amazement of her friends, at the opera, before the ballet was half over ; and I actually had her at a *séance* of the *Institut* before the expected *discours* of the long-winded Mons. Quatremère de Quincy had quite concluded.

My indolent and agreeable friend, notwithstanding this decided *vis inertiae*, talked in raptures of the country (like all French women), and had a *campagne* three leagues from Paris, about which she raved, and from which her *jardinière* was duly replenished with March violets, April hyacinths, and *immortels* all the year. Daily projects were made, and as daily broken, for taking me to this “*Délices* ;” and it was not till after a thousand “*Nous remettrons celà à un autre jour*,” that the day at last arrived, when, having myself made all the necessary preparations for a formidable journey of three leagues, assisted at the *levée*, hurried forward the toilette, and bribed over Félicie, her unfelicitous *femme de chambre*, to unusual expedition, I at last got

Madame de — under weigh, and absolutely transported her from her *dormeuse au coin du feu*, to her *calèche*. With horses and a coachman as lazy as herself, it was late in the evening when we arrived within view of the iron gates of the *campagne*; and before we had reached the end of the straight avenue of limes, it was so dark that we could scarcely discern the grim, grotesque stone statues of Arlequin and Colombine, which guarded the flight of marble steps, leading to the broad paved terrace on which the *maison de campagne* was perched.

Before we had reposed from the fatigues of the journey, and swallowed our *goûté*, it was what is vulgarly called pitch-dark; and as the motive for making this *course* was to see the gardens, the *serres chaudes*, and the luxuriant beds of hyacinths, then in all their “redolence of bloom,” I could not help expressing my disappointment, with a captiousness which afforded infinite amusement to Madame de —, whose bursts of laughter were interrupted with “*Et tout cela pour une fleur! pour un promenade! pour une fatigue manqué!*”* My ill-humour, however, was at once

* “And all this for a flower and a walk—for a fatigue the less.”

vanquished, on beholding the gardener enter the room with a lighted lantern, and equipped with a nightcap under his hat, to conduct us to the garden. We immediately followed our guide; and, accompanied by Félicie picking her short steps over the dewy gravel, and her mistress's fat dog, Sylphide, waddling beside her, we actually saw the hyacinths, and noticed the fine growth of the precocious *petits pois*, by candle-light.

With such inertness and hatred of all movement, it may readily be imagined that a necessity, which soon afterwards occurred to Madame de —, for visiting the remotest part of the remote province of Bretagne, was an event full of difficulty and annoyance. A considerable property, however, depended on her attendance on the *Cour d'Assise* of Rennes, and there was no alternative.

After procrastinating from day to day, and being half inclined to incur the risk of absence, and to leave her *procès* to take care of itself, she at length decided to go on my offering to accompany her. I was just then in a fit of *ennui* at finding all London in Paris, and was delighted by the hope of visiting a province that had the merit

of being free from the incursions of his Britannic Majesty's somewhat tiresome subjects. My proposition was accepted with a sort of incredulous joy ; for a sacrifice of such magnitude was not to be understood : so leaving behind us *tous nos enfans et tous nos maris*, we started for Brittany, on a brilliant April morning, in a style that recalled the travelling of the days of Louis XIV. when the *carrosse d'un Grand Seigneur* was a moving house, and (from the number of persons to be stuffed into its *portières*, its *sur le devant*, and other holes and corners) a house of no inconsiderable dimensions.

Madame de ——— travelled with her own four sleek horses, her own carriage, and as many of her habitual comforts and *nécessaires* as could be stuffed into its seats, pockets, wells, and imperials. Félicie and Sylphide occupied the back seats, as tenants in common with cushions, pillows, walking-canes, parasols, *vitchouras*, and the *nécessaire de toilette*. Madame de ———, wrapped up in her *douillette* and cachemir, with *eau de chipre* in one hand, and her *bonbonnière* in the other, was obliged to

have frequent recourse to both, in order to support her through the fatigue of the day. The historical sites of Rambouillet and Maintenon, on the contrary, kept me fully awake, till we arrived at the old town of ———, one of Madame de Sévigné's oft-cited stages, on her way to Les Rochers. Here we alighted before the *porte-cochère* of the *Préfet* (the uncle of Madame de ———, *à la mode de Bretagne*), whose salon presented in miniature all that is ridiculous, pompous, grovelling, and contemptible in the Court of the Tuileries. The *Préfet* represented *noblement et avec dignité*; and did the honours by his fair cousin, before his country subjects, as if she were a princess visiting the court of a brother prince; while Madame de ———, on her part, exhibited all the superiority, which Parisian ladies never fail to show off in their penitential pilgrimages to the provinces.

Amused for a time, but delighted to leave behind me the formality of the little court of the Prefecture, it was with no faint pleasure I saw my dilatory friend seated in her carriage at a reasonable hour on the following morning. Being

one of those who, like Boileau's abbot, had never seen the sun rise, the exertion soon overpowered her; and she fell into a profound sleep, in which she was joined by Sylphide and Félicie; while the novelty of all I beheld, kept me in that delightful excitement, in which alone we truly feel the value of existence.

The old feudal dukedom of Bretagne, intact from the common places of British travellers, untrodden by their restless steps, untraced by their busy pens—is still the Bretagne of Louis XIV. The natives continue to preserve their individuality, as in the days of their rude but heroic *souverains*. Genuine and unmixed descendants of the ancient Britons (who took refuge here when expelled from their own country), they remain to this day as unlike the inhabitants of the southern and central provinces of France, as if they still went *in puris naturalibus*, and painted their bodies blue. We had scarcely passed the Loire, when I observed an abrupt change in the physiognomy of the people. In the pure Armorican, or Bas-Breton of the aubergiste of the ancient town of Laval, I was struck by the rhythm and accent of my compa-

triot, the Celts,* and almost fancied myself listening to some Mrs. O'Shaughnessy in Connaught, or to the reading of a page from the Scotch novels. As we proceeded into the department of *Ille et Vilaine*, the heart of the province, the scenery became gradually less and less French. The dense and distant forests, shading to the edge of the flat, extensive heaths, recalled all the romantic desolation of northern dreariness; relieved by patches of rank verdure and flowering orchards, much more picturesque than the vaunted "vine-covered hills" of France.

Bretagne, only united to the French crown in 1532, by the marriage of Francis the First with the grand-daughter of its last duke, was so long governed in the true spirit of feudality by its petty but warlike princes, that its political circumstances, combining with a remote and insulated position, excluded it from all participation in the progressive civilization of Europe. In the Revolution, it suf-

* When Louis XIV. sent an army to dragoon the Britons into submission, on their resistance to his oppressive taxation, they fell on their knees, and cried aloud, "Mea culpa, mea culpa!" "C'étoit," says Madame de Sévigné, "le seul mot de François qu'ils savoient."

fered much by the Vendean wars, which threw it back nearly to what it was under Louis XIV.; nor has the share which it had in the general reorganization of France, materially changed its original physiognomy, either physically or morally. Rude and remote, however, as it was, it still produced some of the finest and most distinguished characters which illustrate the history of France. The two rival and romantic Dukes, Charles de Blois, and John de Montfort ;† the heroic Jeanne

† The *Traité des Landes*, made between these two pretenders to the Duchy, was characteristic of the men and times.—“ Rien de plus simple que les conditions. Le Duché étoit partagé en deux. Chacun devoit porter le titre de Duc, et avoir sa capitale ; Rennes pour l'un, Nantes pour l'autre. On se sépara avec promesses de se rejoindre, dans un lieu indiqué, pour convenir des arrangemens que le partage exigeoit, et recevoir la ratification de la Duchesse, Jeanne la Boiteuse, épouse de Charles de Blois. C'est d'elle, qu'il tenoit le duché de Bretagne. Quand elle eut lu le traité que son mari lui envoya, elle dit à celui qui l'apportoit, ‘ Il fait trop bon marché de ce qui n'est pas à lui ;’ et dans sa lettre de réponse, elle lui mandoit, ‘ Vous ferez ce qu'il vous plaira ; je ne suis qu'une femme, et ne puis mieux : mais plutôt je perdrais la vie, ou deux si je les avais, avant de consentir à chose si reprochable, à la honte des miens.’ Sa lettre étoit mouillée de larmes ; l'époux en fut ému ; et encore plus, lorsque en quittant sa femme, qu'il étoit allé voir, elle lui dit, ‘ Conservez-moi votre cœur, mais aussi conservez-moi mon Duché ; et quelque chose qu' arrive, faites que la souveraineté me reste toute entière.’ Il le promit, baisa sa dame, et partit.”—ANQUETIL.

la Boiteuse, Duchess of the province, in whose right Charles de Blois held the sovereignty; the clever Olivier de Clisson, constable of France; the gallant Tennegui du Chatel; and that flower of chivalry, Bertrand du Guesclin "le franc et loyal," are characters which belong to the poetry of history, and almost redeem those bold, bad times, which produced such human monsters as Charles le Mauvais, and Pierre le Cruel. It is, perhaps, no false induction to assert, that much of their soldierly frankness and noble simplicity arose from an organization, nourished and preserved by the very localities of the rude clime and wild scenery in which they received their existence.

With the history of Bertrand du Guesclin in my hand, which had been lent me by my host of the Prefecture, (that history which Madame de Sévigné had recommended to Madame de Grignan,) and with my head full of de Montfort and de Blois, and *les grandes compagnies*, and the *mala-drins*, and the Black Prince, and Jean Chandos, and the other prominent characters in the great melodrame enacted in Bretagne during the fourteenth century, I was abruptly recalled to the dull

realities of the present moment, on the evening of the third day's journey, by a shock, a concussion, that awoke my sleeping partners, and extorted exclamations from Madame de —, screams from Félicie, and a loud, shrill, continuous howl from Sylphide. These, with the crashing of *flacons*, and the pious interjections of the coachman Baptiste, and the *gros juron* of Hypolite the laquais, “gave the world assurance” that we were “abîmés, plantés pour la nuit,”—in one word, that the carriage was not only overturned, but rendered wholly unserviceable, till it should have passed through the renovating hands of a country smith.

To proceed farther was impossible ; we were, by a mile or two, less than half-way between Vitri (where we had dined, “à la tour de Sévigné,”) and Rennes, our proposed halt for the night. Baptiste was a Bas-Breton ; and having assured us that he knew every step of the road, *comme son bonnet de nuit*, he had turned into a narrow cross road, which was to have shortened the distance by a league. It was this unlucky pretension that produced the accident, which now left us, at

sunset, in a dreary by-road, with a broken-down vehicle, and no visible prospect of aid, nearer than Vitri. While Madame de — was exhausting herself in inefficient complaint, while Félicie was scolding Baptiste from the window, and Sylphide was accompanying both with a *basso continuo* of howl, I alighted to reconnoitre our position, and discover what chance we had of assistance; and while Baptiste was showing me where the spring was broken, a person approached with a book in his hand, from the gate of a little orchard to the left. As he took off his hat and discovered his tonsured head, he observed, that there was a forge belonging to the château, the turrets of which were visible through the dark woods which cover the whole plain between Vitri and Rennes; that immediate assistance could be had, and the spring patched up, so as to bring us, with careful driving, to Rennes before midnight. The person who gave us this information was an elderly man, of interesting appearance, and in a clerical habit, with a certain *air de prêtre*, which left us no doubt as to his vocation.

“ Et le château, Monsieur ? ” demanded Madame de — ; “ what is its name ? It probably belongs to some of my friends ; for I am connected with nearly all the old noblesse of the province.”

“ It is the Château des Rochers, Madame ! ”

“ The Château des Rochers ! ” reiterated Madame de —.

“ The château of Madame de Sévigné ! ” I exclaimed, with almost breathless delight.

The stranger bowed assent. “ Eh, mon dieu ! qui est donc le châtelain ? to what noble family has it descended ? The Sévignés are extinct ; and I believe Les Rochers were bequeathed to the Duchesse de Simiane by her illustrious grandmother.”

“ Les Rochers have fallen into various hands within the last half-century, Madame. It was sold, with other national property, at the Revolution. The present proprietor is a rich gentleman of the province, Le Baron de —. He is at present in Paris ; but there will be no difficulty in showing you the château, which may amuse away the time till your carriage is set to rights.”

Madame de —, who had not heard the name of the present proprietor of Les Rochers, whispered me, “ Ah ! ma belle, ce Monsieur le Baron d’aujourd’hui est sans doute une de la Bande Noire,”* coldly declined the proposition, and as rest, to her, was always enjoyment, she patiently resigned herself to the agreeable infliction of remaining tranquilly in the carriage ; while Félicie, who descended to give Sylphide an airing, immediately seated herself on a mossy bank by the road side ; and Hypolite, mounting one of the coach-horses, rode off for the smith, the smoke of whose forge was visible at a short distance.

The idea of visiting Les Rochers, whence so many of the inimitable letters of the most charming writer in the world were written, appeared to me rather a pleasant dream, than a reality. I could scarcely credit my luck. So taking the stranger’s offered arm, I promised Madame de — a speedy return, and proceeded to the shrine of “ Notre Dame des Rochers,” with as much devotional enthusiasm as ever carried a jubilee pilgrim across the Pontine

* “ This mushroom Baron is most likely one of the Black band”—the purchasers and dilapidators of the forfeited châteaux.

Marshes, from the Abruzzi to St. Peter's. Having cut across the little orchard, we were still involved in a woody copse, which gave us only partial gleams of the white towers of the château. "Envoyez-moi de la vue, et je vous enverrai des arbres,"* writes Madame de Sévigné to Madame de Grignan: and the request is still applicable to the site, which is covered with trees, to the total exclusion of some charming views, which, with a little effort, might be happily commanded from the building. The château and its mass of antique towers stand upon an esplanade, after the manner of the feudal edifices of France. *La cour du château*, spacious and gloomy, is shut in by a ponderous iron gate, through which I gazed with a fluttering heart, while the old porter, summoned by the stranger, went for his keys to give us admission. Nothing could be more antique and picturesque than the architecture, tinged and partially lighted, as it was, by a brilliant sunset. The château is said to date its erection as far back as the fourteenth century; and its high antiquity was verified by a spiral flight of stairs, cut out of a tower in the *corps de logis*;

* "Send me your prospects, and I will send you my trees."

which was flanked by two other towers,—the whole bordered by grim Gothic heads, and monstrous nondescript representations of animals, which incrustated the upper part of the building, from the springing of the roof to its summit. One little tower stood apart, built in the same grotesque style, except that its roof resembled an extinguisher.

“That,” said my cicerone, “is a modern building. It is the chapel mentioned in Madame de Sévigné’s letters, built by her for *le bien bon*, the amiable and witty Abbé de Coulanges.”

The porter now gave us admittance; and as we paused before the interesting edifice, which, with Turkish barbarity, had been recently whitewashed, he exclaimed, “It is another thing now, *pardie*, to what it was before the Revolution, with its green and brown walls, and moss, and ivy, and birds’ nests, and what not! — Mais nous avons changés tout cela—nous avons reblanchi toutes ces vieilles mesures, à la chaux; et encore donné trois couches bien épaisses en dehors et en dedans.”*

* “We have whitewashed all the old premises, and given them three coats, inside and out.”

The old porter then waddled on before us, and the stranger observed, in a low voice, as if replying to the disgust my looks involuntarily expressed, “ Monsieur le Concierge, it seems, has never read the letters of Madame de Sévigné. They have indeed changed this most interesting of all sites into a grotesque *métairie* ;” and pointing to a *lavoir* and stables decorated with Corinthian columns, the curé added, “ And yet this is not the worst !”

We were now in the hall of the château, and followed our cicerone through the apartments not closed against the intrusion of strangers ; but all had been so recently and thoroughly changed to the modern style of decoration, that there was scarcely any object left to recal *la bellissima madre*, except her portrait by Mignard, which was placed over *le poêle* in the dining-room. Dark, low, and narrow, this apartment could not have been the room in which Madame de Sévigné so often entertained the splendid governor of the province and his lady, the high-bred Palatine, with the jovial, gay, and witty visitors, the Coulanges, Pomenars, and others of rank and talents, whom

the assembling of the States General at Rennes brought to the château. Nothing now remained as it had been even so recently as the year 1810.

“ Every thing has been destroyed and effaced,” whispered the stranger: “ and even the *cabinet de lecture* and the bedchambers of Madame de Sévigné and Madame de Grignan (where the portrait of *la belle et fière comtesse* still hangs) have undergone a similar and equally barbarous alteration.”

As these classical and historical apartments were locked up, and as time pressed, and the sun was sinking, we hurried on to the gardens and grounds, so often described by Madame de Sévigné. But still change, barbarous, pitiless change prevailed. New walls, new terraces, new orangeries destroyed all those precious associations so intimately connected with the old. They had also recently cut down those *allées*, planted and watched with such maternal tenderness by Madame de Sévigné ; and as their sites were pointed out to me, I could not avoid exclaiming, “ Helas ! qu’est devenu ce bosquet enchanté ? ”

“Que voulez-vous, Madame?” asked the old gardener, pettishly. “We have cut them down to make chicken-hatches for Madame.”

The stranger, to console me, exhibited the phenomenon of the echo, so often cited to Madame de Grignan, and which, as it could not be turned to any account for the hen-coops, still remains in all its original mystery.

“L’allée de ma fille still existed in 1810,” said my guide, as evident a Sevignite as myself; “but there now remains not one of those venerable witnesses, which so often shaded and sheltered in their promenades the tenderest of mothers and the most adored of daughters. Not one old and silent confidant exists of those *piquantes causeries* between the witty *maman beauté*, and that *trésor de folie*, her still wittier son,—of the strange but humorous confessions, followed by such mild reprimands, and such sarcastic pleasantries,—and of those *aveux naïfs de l’aimable vaurien*, who in one night at Lansequenet *mangeait 500 gros chênes à sa mère*, and who, brave as Condé, *spirituel* as St. Evremont, had entered the lists with Dacier, concerning Horace, had lived with Racine,

laughed with Molière, jilted Ninon, *se grisait par bon air*, committed a thousand follies, confessed them all a thousand times to his *belle maman*, and, always forgiven, continued to repent old pleasures at Les Rochers, and to solicit new, on his return to Paris."

I inquired in vain for those formal and venerable *allées*, ornamented with so many pretty devices, and consecrated by such recollections;—all had fallen victims to the axe of the terrible Baron Breton. Their names, however, still survived; and I had the melancholy pleasure of walking over the ground which was still known as "l'Allée Royale," "l'Allée du Point du Jour," "l'Allée de Tremaine," and "l'Allée de l'Infinie." At the farther extremity of the Allée Royale, a semi-circular seat of verdure, commanding a delicious view of the *coteaux boisés* of the immediate neighbourhood, invited us to a momentary halt. This was the charming spot, whence Madame de Sevigné wrote so many of her letters,—“la Place de Madame.” It was decorated with a fine old orange-tree, which had been removed from its vast green-house, in a wooden *caisse*, by the stranger

himself, in the absence of the baron. - While we gazed on the rich and lovely vista, the sunlight gradually faded from the summits of the loftiest trees, the shadows deepened, and the necessity of returning was acknowledged with regret, and obeyed with reluctance.

Having begged permission, therefore, to gather a little *bouquet* from the orange-tree which shaded “ la Place de Madame,” I again accepted the arm of the courteous cicerone. As we proceeded towards the carriage, my thoughts were so completely transported to the days of the La Rochefoucaulds, the Coulanges, and the La Moussés, that, forgetting the lapse of a century, and of events that had doubled that interval, I inquired if any of the family of the amusing Mademoiselle du Plessis, the *bas bleu* of Vitri, and the subject of Madame de Sévigné’s humorous delineations, were still in the neighbourhood.* He replied, that of the *dramatis personæ*

* “ Mademoiselle du Plessis est tout justement comme vous l’avez laissée. Elle a une nouvelle amie à Vitri, dont elle se pare, parce que c’est un bel esprit, qui a lu tous les romans, et qui a reçu deux lettres de la Princesse de Tarente. J’ai fait dire méchamment par Vaillant, que je ne témoignerais rien ; mais que mon cœur étoit saisi. Tout ce qu’elle dit là-dessus, est digne de Molière.”

Lettres de Madame de Sévigné, vol. i. p. 199.

of Les Rochers, of all those who had played such amusing and characteristic parts in the correspondence of Madame de Sévigné, he knew but one name that had survived the lapse of time and the general *bouleversement*. It was that of Pilois.

“What !” I said, “the favourite and venerable gardener of Madame de Sévigné, who planted those very trees under whose shade we are walking ?* Do any of his descendants reside here ?”

“His great grandson has the honour of addressing you,” he replied, bowing.

We were now within view of the carriage; and taking from my neck a little cross of Irish bog-wood, I requested him to accept of it, as a small token of acknowledgment for the pleasure I had derived through his means, in being permitted to visit the shrine of the goddess “of my idolatry,” and to enjoy a conversation with the descendant of her faithful friend and domestic, to whose cha-

* “Mes petits arbres sont d’une beauté surprenante. Pilois les élève jusqu’au nues. Rien n’est si beau que ces Allées, que vous avez vu naître. Vous savez que je vous donnai une manière de devise, qui vous convenoit. Voici un mot que j’ai écrit sur un arbre pour mon fils, qui est revenu de Candie, ‘vago di fama.’”—

Lettres de Madame de Sévigné, p. 200.

racter his illustrious lady had communicated a classic and deathless interest. The good clergyman blushed, bowed, and accepted my offering, with as much courtesy, and a feeling apparently as deep, as if it had been of “one entire and perfect crysolite.” The spring was now patched up, and pronounced capable of carrying us to Rennes. We therefore bade a hasty adieu to our accidental acquaintance, and soon lost sight of the ancient and memorable towers of Le Château des Rochers.*

* This article, already printed, has been so favourably received by the public, that I have ventured to reclaim it from the miscellany in which it originally appeared. It may be scarcely necessary to add, that as far as the personal narrative is concerned, the production is a mere *jeu d'esprit*, undertaken to fulfil a task incurred at a game of forfeits.

STRAWBERRY HILL.

"Some cry up Gunnersbury,
 For Sion some declare,
 And some say that with Chiswick House
 No villa can compare;
 But ask the beaux of Middlesex,
 Who know the country well,
 If Strawberry Hill—if Strawberry Hill
 Don't bear away the bell."

Earl of Bath's Ballad on Strawberry Hill.

LORD BYRON has somewhere observed, that it has long been the fashion for the *canaille* of literary criticism to vituperate Horace Walpole, "because he was a gentleman." An unfounded observation, which the "Edinburgh Review" has successfully refuted,—and refuted upon the testimony of a deeper experience, and more intimate knowledge of the science of literary economy (if the phrase may be allowed,) than could have been attained by one, whose high rank, and high genius, alike placed him far beyond the dabbings of

literary intrigue, or the possibility of intellectual subserviency.

If ministers of state best know every man's price in the political market, if they are best acquainted with the inherent littleness of that "poor human nature," to the corruptibility of which they have the means of applying such powerful stimulants, such resistless temptations,—the editors of an influential party and periodical work best know of what stuff those "Swiss of the press" are made, who deal out opinion according "to the measure that is measured unto them" by their taskers,—of what mixed metal the current coin of literary criticism is composed, which ductile, though base, takes the mark of any dye impressed on it by the master-worker of the mint. The Edinburgh Reviewers, therefore, told Lord Byron, and told him truly, that, as a body, the periodical critics of the day bore no malice against Lord Orford, because he was "a gentleman," and that, far from rank being injurious to literary fame, even *he*, Lord Byron, *the star of the ascendant*, stood indebted for the lenity with which the author of "Don Juan" was treated by the most orthodox reviewers

in England, at least as much to the elevation of his rank, as to the loftiness of his genius—to his “gentle blood,” as to his splendid talents. The fact is, that if

“A saint in crape be twice a saint in lawn,”

an author in a coronet has *twice* the chance of obtaining a favourable judgment, that can be expected by mere plebeian talent, which has only its original merits to plead for those “sins” which all literary “flesh is heir to.”

With what indulgence has not the accomplished, but titled Author of “Matilda” been treated by the reviewing hierarchy of the day, even in spite of the little *faux-pas* which forms the groundwork of his catastrophe,—in spite of the *vertu de moins* of his *bon-ton* heroine,—in spite of a moral produced by a cold in the head (when a more legitimate source of poetical justice was at hand, in the fate and story of many fair contemporary *délaissées* in real life and living frailty)—nay, in spite even of his whiggism, his liberalism, and his anti-Austrianism; and when rebuked, how gently and with what a *patte de velours* has this lordly

author been treated by the great conservators of public and literary morals. What honours indeed have not been done to the light and pleasant pages of one, who has so agreeably added to the daily increasing list of noble authors,* and who is certainly something more than “a wit among lords, and a lord among wits.” But who among the literary toparchs, who are so ready to bring mediocrity into fashion, and to patronize the usurpations that can never interfere with their own acknowledged supremacy—who among the great fame-bestowing reviewers, that “give and take away” the bubble reputation, or try to do it, have turned out the author of “Crohoore of the Bill Hook,” and “John Doe,” for public admiration? And yet in these two great pictures of an unopened vein of national manners, there is as

* Every possible encouragement should be held out to the rising aristocracy, to pursue other roads to distinction than those acquired by coronets and quarterings. Upon such heaven-born distinctions, the world is now somewhat *désabusé*! thanks to the Monsieur Tonsons of the French revolution, and to the Jesuitism and *toujours en arrière* vocation of the *premier sang Chrétien de l'Europe*. The *bel air* pages of “Matilda” and “Granby,” light as they are, are real benefactions, after the eternal imitations of the Scotch novels.

bold etching, and as fine masses of *chiaro oscuro*, as were ever produced even by the exquisite burin of the Scottish Rembrandt. It was not, then, the gentility of Horace Walpole, that stood in the way of his preferment in reviews, and his popularity with the members of literary coteries. Yet that he has been borne down, from his own to the present time, both by the corporate bodies, and by the honorary members of criticism, is quite true—his claims to genius denied, his pretensions to taste ridiculed, his style termed “slip-slop,” his “Historic Doubts” doubted, and his villa at Strawberry Hill, which he himself has named “a paper fabric to hold an assemblage of curious trifles,” selected as a *damning proof* against his antiquarianism, by the learned young gentlemen of the “old lady’s logic”*(the learning which draws fools from their obscurity)—who have always affected to consider it as a “Gothic Vatican of Greece and Rome,” and a standing monument of his ignorance of all true *virtù*. And yet Horace Walpole *has* established his claims to genius by its

* Archæology, so called playfully by H. W.

own highest prerogative—original invention ! His “Castle of Otranto” is the first of its genus,* and has consecrated him the founder of that delightful school of literary fiction, of which Radcliffe, Scott, and a host of far inferior spirits, are but the disciples;† while his “Cor-

* “It was an attempt to blend the two kinds of romance,” says its author, “the ancient and the modern. In the former, all was imagination and improbability : in the latter, nature is always intended to be (and sometimes has been) copied with success. Invention has not been wanting ; but the great resources of fancy have been dammed up, by a strict adherence to common life. But if in the latter species nature has cramped imagination, she did but take her revenge, having been totally excluded from old romances. The actions, sentiments, conversations, of the heroes and heroines of ancient days, were as unnatural as the machines employed to put them in motion.”—*Preface to the second edition of Otranto.*

† The first imitation of Otranto was “The Old English Baron,” of which Walpole gives the following notice. “I have seen, too, the criticism you mention on ‘The Castle of Otranto,’ in the preface to ‘The Old English Baron.’ It is not at all oblique, but, though mixed with high compliments, directly attacks the visionary part, which, says the author or authoress, makes one laugh. I do assure you, I have not had the smallest inclination to return that attack. It would even be ungrateful, for the work is a professed imitation of mine, only stripped of the marvellous—and so entirely stripped, except in one awkward attempt at a ghost or two, that it is the most insipid dull nothing you ever saw. It certainly does not make one laugh ; for what makes one doze, seldom makes one merry.”—*Correspondence of Horace Walpole.*

respondence" has supplied to British literature that elegant branch of familiar composition, so long a desideratum. The letters of Horace Walpole have almost the merit of original inventions, compared with all the printed collections which preceded his own, (with the sole exception of those of his contemporary, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu.*) The letters of Howell (deemed models in their time) had long been condemned by the standard simplicity of modern taste, which loves epigrams, and hates essays; and had already taken their places on the dusty shelves

“ With all such reading as is never read.”

* Lady M. W. Montagu's letters, judged by the conventional standard of modern refinement, must be deemed occasionally vulgar, coarse, and indelicate; but they are clever, spirited, and easy, and invaluable for the traits of manners they have preserved of her own times. Her anecdotes of her friends, Moll Skerratt, Peg Pelham, Biddy Noel, and the pretty fellows,—her lady-like remedy against spleen, galloping all day, and champagne at night,—are exquisite. Her account also of the state of morals, in those good old times, is worth quoting:—“ When honour, virtue, and reputation, are laid aside like crumpled ribbons, the forlorn state of matrimony is as much ridiculed by young ladies as by young fellows.”—See her Letters, Vol. I.

It is worth adding, that Lady Mary was so sensible of the supe-

The quaint and peremptory style of Swift's never *very familiar* epistles (his Journal to Stella excepted), though certainly a pure and sterling specimen of the English language of the Augustan day, wanted that *laissez-aller* charm, which is the perfection of letter-writing; and Pope's *Voiture*-like and *spirituel* epistles, have all the air of being got up for print, and were evidently as much intended for the public and his publisher, as for his mistress or his friend.* Even Addison's "Letters," (to whose style and "study" we are ordered by the once colossal dictator of literature—ponderous but not powerful—already a Hercules without his club—to "give up our days and nights,"—a false and despotic counsel! as if every age has not necessa-

rity of her own letters over those of her contemporaries, that she makes the following prophecy of their future success:—"The last pleasant work that fell in my way, was Madame de Sevigne's Letters: very pretty they are; but I assure you, without the least vanity, that mine will be full as interesting in forty years."

* See Pope's love-letter to Lady M. W. Montagu, in which he talks of "Momus his project," and gets in, neck and shoulders, Herod and Herodias, Jupiter and Curtius, to show off his power of "wit and raillery," and prove the strength of his passion by the force of his learning. "Before Addison and Swift," says Walpole, "style was scarce aimed at even by our best authors."

rily its own style, dependent upon the progress of society and the development of human intellect and science)—even Addison's "Letters," cold, formal, and studied, are as devoid of originality as the travels of which they are supposed to be a journal;* while Richardson's epistles to his literary ladies are tiresome as the homilies of his own "good Mrs. Norton." Gay (and perhaps Arbuthnot sometimes) has alone given to his letters the charm of that exquisite simplicity, which was the characteristic feature of the talent of the English La Fontaine; and Sterne, whose letters, though witty and agreeable, are affected, came rather too late to be offered as an exception to the studied and pedantic style, which left England without a good letter-writer, while France justly boasted so many.

Good letter-writing is but good conversation carried on by the pen, a familiar talking upon paper, the intimate chit-chat of the fire-side on its travels by post, not invented solely for some "wretch's

* "Mr. Addison travelled through the poets, and not through Italy; for all his ideas are borrowed from descriptions, and not from the reality."—*Correspondence of Horace Walpole*

aid," but resorted to by the fond and the feeling to cheat absence of its pang; or by the intellectual, and the social, "for the better carrying on" of that intercourse of mind and imagination, without which life is a blank; or by the gay, and the gossiping, for the circulation of those petty interests and every-day incidents and events, which, if important to none, are resources to all, which prevent time from stagnating, and which originate ideas, the lightness of which gives temporary relief from the great penalties of existence, deep thinking and deep feeling. The best letter, therefore, is that which makes the least demand upon the mind, and the most upon the fancy and the heart. He who writes to be studied, rarely writes to be read; he who writes to be admired, rarely writes to please. Ye Seignés, and ye Ninons,* to whom *l'esprit Rambouillet* was a source of perpetual ridicule, I invoke the careless spirit that

* I allude here to Ninon's genuine letters, many of which are to be found scattered through the works of St. Evremond, and her supposed letters, addressed to the Marquis de Sévigné. "Les vraies lettres de Ninon," says a modern French critic, "étoient moins recherchés et plus délicates, quoique le tour en soit singulier et qu'elles soient remplies de morale et brillantes d'esprit."

pervades your delightful letters to attest the truth of the observation, and to bear witness in favour of the only letter-writer in the English language, who resembles or who rivals you ! The letters of Horace Walpole were written evidently *à trait de plume*,* carelessly and playfully, and yet, like those of the goddess of his idolatry, they are eminently “ *propres à faire connaître les mœurs, le ton, l'esprit, les usages de son tems ;*” indeed he himself confesses, in one of his sketching details of the day, thrown off at a heat for the amusement of George Montague, and of his hero Harry Conway, (whose character and adventures, by the by, give a sort of epic interest to his correspondence) that he was “collecting the follies of the age for the benefit of posterity.” He was in fact, and often unconsciously, the Dangeau of his times and class ; and in the course of his agreeable and epistolary gossiping, “enshrined in amber” the ephemeral “flies” of fashion, the autocrats of high society, who, insignificant in themselves, illustrate by their

* He says of his own letters :—“ I write more trifling letters than any man living ; am ashamed of them ; and yet they are expected of me.”

reigning manners and vices the history of the age in which they flourish, as “Kiteats” and “schemers,” the despots of Cornelis or Almack’s.* He has also left some characters of men, whose names belong to history, finer and truer than history herself could delineate. The true secret of Horace Walpole’s unpopularity with a large class of professional and amateur literati, who deny his claims to that reputation which genius alone can give, is the unmitigated war, the *guerre à la mort*, which he waged, almost from the go-cart to the tomb, against all pretension, and against all unfounded and self-sufficient claims to distinction. He not only attacked those influential *bodies corporate*, who have obtained authority over public opinion, merely by assuming it,† but with daring scepticism, and

* For the schemers see Lady M. W. Montagu’s letters. The following passage from one of Walpole’s letters contains a curious prediction of the future supremacy of Almack’s :—“Mrs. Cornelis, apprehending the future assembly at Almack’s, has enlarged her vast room, and hung it with blue satin, and another with yellow satin ; but Almack’s room, which is to be ninety feet long, proposes to swallow up both hers as easily as Moses’s rod gobbled down those of the magicians.”

† See his admirable sketches of those “rags of a dishclout ministry,” which he has scattered through his letters ; particularly the

moral courage, he attacked the false gods of the popular worship of his day, set up by bad taste, or imposed on credulity by audacious talent.* He attacked the cant of Warburton,† and the affectation of Rousseau. He attacked the buckram heroes and heroines of Richardson, when it was “religion to adore them,”‡ and declared Sir Charles a bore, and Clarissa a quiz! He attacked the authenticity of Ossian, when it was deemed heresy to doubt it. He attacked the most imposing historical fallacies, which ages had consecrated through party prejudice down to the present times. He attacked scientific pedantry in the “old lady’s logic,” and de-

Duke of Newcastle. See also his letters to, and various anecdotes of Lord Chatham.

* “For my writings, they do not depend on venal authors, but on their own merits and demerits. It is from men of sense they must expect their sentence, not from boobies and hireling authors, whom I have always shunned, with the whole fry of minor wits, critics, and monthly censors.”—*H. Walpole’s Correspondence*.

† “The turn-coat, hypocrite, infidel, Bishop Warburton.”—*Ibid*.

‡ “There are two more volumes come out of Sir Charles Grandison. I shall detain them till the last is published, and not think I postpone much of your pleasure. For my part, I stopped at the fourth: I was so tired of sets of people getting together and saying, ‘Pray, Miss, with whom are you in love?’ and of mighty good young men, who convert your Mr. M.’s in the twinkling of a sermon.”—*Correspondence of H. Walpole*.

tected literary imposition in the person of Chatterton. He attacked those solemn and sentimental vices of high society, which were then beginning to make their way to England,—from the voluptuous bowers of the Medici, to the sober mansions of the stern and rigid English gentry :* and lastly, and worst, the head and front of his offence, he attacked that loyalty which he himself terms “the loyalty to Kings in possession,”—he attacked its *alma mater*, Oxford, as a “nursery of bigotry and nonsense ;”† and made war upon Toryism in its strongest hold—divine-righted prerogative, and

* “On Wednesday we expect a third she-meteor. Those learned luminaries the Ladies Pomfret and W—— are to be joined by the Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. You have not been witness to the rhapsody of mystic nonsense which these two fair ones debate incessantly, and consequently cannot figure what must be the issue of this triple alliance ; we have some idea of it. Only figure the coalition of prudery, debauchery, sentiment, history, Greek, Latin, French, Italian, and metaphysics, all except the second understood by halves, by quarters, or not at all. You shall have the journals of this notable academy.”—*Correspondence of H. Walpole*.

† “I was diverted with two relics of St. Charles the martyr : one, the pearl you see in his pictures, taken out of his ear after his foolish head was off ; the other, the cup out of which he took his last sacrament. They should be given to that nursery of nonsense and bigotry, Oxford.”—*Ibid*.

royal infallibility and martyrdom.* For such an assailant there could be *point de salut*, and there was none. The blockheads of pretension, more particularly, flew to arms,—a powerful body in all times, “*car l’empire des bêtes est un fait constaté dans l’histoire :*” and though two generations have nearly passed away since the first blow was struck, still the rancour of assuming mediocrity, wounded in its life-nerve, is a bequest that descends from generation to generation :

“ Et les envieux meurent, mais non pas l’envie.”

The leading trait of Walpole’s intellectual tem-

* “What foundation can there be for subjects devoting themselves to their prince, if he is bound by no reciprocal ties? If they are his chattels, his herd, his property, oaths are frivolous. He has power to punish them, if they revolt, whether they are sworn to him or not. To swear a king without reciprocity from him, is subjecting our souls to him, as well as our bodies. We are to be damned to all eternity, if he makes his tyranny intolerable. Proclaim him God at once: God alone can be trusted with power over our minds: God alone can judge how much we can endure. The blindest bigot to the memory of Charles I. or James II. cannot deny that both were the original aggressors. Had they both acted conformably to the constitution and laws, no man living can think that any part of the nation would have revolted.”—*Life of Mr. Thomas Baker, by Horace Walpole.*

perament was evidently a quick and delicate perception of the truth of things, moral and material, in nature and art. The true and unerring tact, that innate endowment by which the ridiculous as well as the false (and the ridiculous is but an amusing set-off of the false) is always rapidly got at, lost nothing of its perfection by his education having been begun and finished in the closet of one of the shrewdest and cleverest ministers that England ever possessed. Shut up with old Sir Robert, *tête-à-tête*,* he learned “to laugh at the madness of political ambition,” and discovered that “happiness did not depend on administration and victories.” In the galleries of Houghton, amidst the trophies of a palace, his early taste for the arts was developed, which testified its exquisite justness in the learned and clever preface, written almost

* The following little anecdote is extremely illustrative of the tenor of the *tête-à-tête* conversations of the father and son, during the last two years that they spent together at Houghton. “In one of those summers, I forget which, desirous of amusing him, which his ill health required, I promised to read to him. He said, ‘What will you read?’ I answered, as a young man would to a statesman, ‘History, Sir.’ ‘No, child,’ said he, ‘I know that cannot be true.’—*Detection of a late Forgery, by H. Walpole.*

in boyhood, to his "*Ædes Walpolianæ*."* It was there too he learnt "what a monarch a man was, who wanted nothing;"† and, governed by a conviction which would have best become a stoic, and by a taste and contempt which were evidently those of an epicurean, he settled down in early life an intellectual voluptuary, preferring enjoyment to fame, yet acquiring the latter, which he so well deserved, while simply occupied in pursuit of the former. So early as his return from Italy, and during his travels, his vocation to *virtù*, or "*l'amour pour l'enquittaille*," as Rabelais terms it, unequivocally declared itself; but his floating capital of taste, which was for a time devoted to the classic antique, properly so called, was soon thrown, for want of a

* See also his sermon on painting, preached at Houghton, and the picturesque descriptions in his own letters, whilst on his travels in Italy. The following is quite a Salvator:—"But the road west, the road! winding round a prodigious mountain, and surrounded by others, all shagged with hanging woods, obscured with pines, or lost in clouds! Below, a torrent, breaking through cliffs, and tumbling through fragments of rocks! Sheets of cascades, forcing their silver speed down channelled precipices, and hasting into the roughened river at the bottom! Now and then an old foot-bridge, with a broken rail, a leaning cross, a cottage, or the ruin of an hermitage."—*Correspondence of Horace Walpole*.

† See his letters to Mr. Pitt, Lord Chatham.

“ quick return” in England (where Roman antiquities are few and bad), into that fund, so rich and yielding in Great Britain, the antiquities of the middle ages. England then abounded in relics of the times of the Chaucers, the Spensers, the Sidneys, and the Shakspeares, relics then neglected and unappreciated. The “ betweenity” which occurred in the interval when the charming Gothic had declined, and the Palladian had not crept in, was in every respect a Bœotian age. Then gardens were built, not planted; and the disciples of Kent, Brown, and Southcote, were still struggling through “ clipt hedges and cockle-shell avenues :” while Sir William Temple’s “ natural walls” and lead-covered grottos, were not yet quite out of fashion, and wildernesses were still composed of straight walks, and caverns were lined with looking-glasses.* The furniture of aristocratic mansions was then half German, half French; cumbrous, not venerable—with all the inconveniences of the antique, without its picturesqueness. While ponderous stuffed chairs and china monsters filled the

* “ Pope has made a subterranean grotto, which he has furnished with looking-glasses.”—*Lady M. W. Montagu.*

apartments of the descendants of the worthies of Elizabeth's court, carvings by Gibbons, and portraits by Holbein, were consigned to lumber-rooms; beds embroidered by the Queen of Scots, and sweet-bags worked by her maids, were left to moulder, while a stiff-backed *bergère*, from some *miroitier's* shop in the Rue de Bac, or a china scone from Sevres, brought any price. Such were the neglected treasures, which discovered themselves to the most ardent of antiquarians and collectors, in his various and delightfully recorded "pilgrimages to the holy lands of Gothic castles and abbeys," the hereditary seats of the Byrons, the Howards, the Seymours, the Russels, the Cavendishes, the Rutlands, the mansions of "Old Bess of Hardwicke,"* and the palace-prisons of captive royalty.

* See his most amusing description of Hardwicke :—"The next is her (Mary Queen of Scots) dressing-room, hung with patch-work on black velvet. Then her state bed-chamber. The bed has been rich beyond description, and now hangs in costly golden tatters. The hangings, part of which they say her Majesty worked, are composed of figures, large as life, sewed and embroidered on black velvet, white satin, &c., and represent the virtues that were necessary for her, or that she was forced to have, as Patience and Temperance, &c. The fire-screens are particular : pieces of yellow velvet, fringed with gold, hang on a cross bar of wood, which is fixed on the top of

It was in the low-roofed chambers, and nests of closets of Monceaux, Haddon, Hatfield, Newstead,* Althorpe, Hinchinbrook, and Chatsworth, that Walpole drew “deeper and deeper still” from the stream of antiquarianism, and was led to unearth those tangible records of past times, which fill up the blanks in history, with details of society, infinitely more interesting than any thing the scene-painting pencil of the historian can preserve: for it is curious to think what a *philosophie des mœurs* may be drawn from an inquiry into a china-closet, or an inquisition held on a lumber-room!—what epochs in commerce and manufactures may be fixed by the dimensions of a coffee-can, or by the fragments of a suit of hangings!—what traits of

a single stick that rises from the foot. The only furniture which has any appearance of taste are the table and cabinets, which are all of oak, richly carved. There is a private chamber within, where she lay, her arms and style over the door. The arras hangs over all the doors. The gallery is sixty yards long, covered with bad tapestry, and wretched pictures of Mary herself, Elizabeth in a gown of sea-monsters,” &c. &c.—*Correspondence of Horace Walpole*.

* “As I returned, I saw Newstead and Althorpe: the former is the very abbey. The great east window of the church remains, and connects with the house; the hall entire, the refectory entire, the cloister untouched, with the ancient cistern of the convent, and their arms on it; a private chapel, quite perfect.”—*Ibid*.

manners and morals may be furnished by hoops of whalebone and bodices of buckram, by the low-cut stomacher of a Cleveland, or the *négligé* of a Pompadour—and what lights and illustrations may be thrown on such works as Grammont, Pepys, and Evelyn, by the plunder of a Dowager Duchess's tall-boy, or the *exploitation* of the coffers and clothes-presses, the cupboards and dark-closets, in which the old mansions of old families always abound.

It was in such pictorial and historical mansions that Horace Walpole imbibed the desire of having a Gothic castle of his own ; and, with his imagination full of the proportions and traceries of Winchester, the fretted roofs of Netley, the cross-legged knights and the piked-horn dames, that started from tombs, or walked out of picture frames,* he began to look out for a spot, where he might found a new school for old things, and arrange around him those objects so early associated in his mind,—relics, which the arts and history of ages had contributed to fill his crowded cabinet. He at last

* He took the idea of the picture walking out of its frame in the "Castle of Otranto," from his own picture of Lord Falkland.

found a site whereon to place this long-built “castle in the air” of his antiquarian dreams; but he neither sought nor found it amidst the romantic shades of Cumberland, nor the old feudal territory of Yorkshire; he simply picked it up, accidentally, with other *bijoux*, at Mrs. Chenevix’s toy-shop, then the *petit Dunkirk* of London. His own account of the acquisition is too pleasant to need an apology for quoting it:—

“You perceive by my date that I am got into a new camp, and have left my tub at Windsor. It is a little plaything house, that I got out of Mrs. Chenevix’s shop, and is the prettiest bauble you ever saw. It is set in enamelled meadows, with filigree hedges:

‘A small Euphrates through the piece is roll’d,
And little fishes wave their wings in gold.’

Two delightful roads, that you would call dusty, supply me continually with coaches and chaises: barges, as solemn as Barons of the Exchequer, move under my window: Richmond Hill and Ham walks bound my prospect; but, thank God! the Thames is between me and the Duchess of Queensberry.

Dowagers as plenty as flounders inhabit all around ; and Pope's ghost is just now skimming under my window by a most poetical moonlight. I have about land enough to keep such a farm as Noah's, when he set up in the ark with a pair of each kind ; but my cottage is rather cleaner than I believe his was, after they had been cooped up together forty days. 'The Chenevixes had tricked it out for themselves ; up two pair of stairs is what they call Mr. Chenevix's library, furnished with three maps, one shelf, a bust of Sir Isaac Newton, and a lame telescope without any glasses. Lord John Sackville predeceased me here, and instituted certain games called Cricketalia, which have been celebrated this very evening, in honour of him, in a neighbouring meadow. You will think I have removed my philosophy from Windsor, with my tea-things, hither ; for I am writing to you in all this tranquillity while a parliament is bursting about my ears."

'The little tenement so playfully described, had already a fine antique cast of character, and was rich in all the advantages of dark closets, and "passages that led to nothing." It had been built

in 1698, had been tenanted alternately by a profane comedian and a reverend divine—for there Talbot, Bishop of Durham, had written his Homilies, and Cibber his play of “The Refusal, or Lady’s Philosophy.” The site, too, abounded in agreeable associations, consonant to the habits and tastes of the elegant proprietor—the air still breathed of Pope, Swift, and Gay; the villas still bloomed where the witty Lady Mary, the charming Lady Hervey, and “Grammont’s daughter,”* had recently resided. Still it must be owned, that, judged by modern ideas of the picturesque in villas, by the dictum of Price or Knight, “the capabilities” of Strawberry were few. It wanted space and prospect, and sometimes made its Gothic reformer sigh “with Chute, that Battel Abbey had not been to be sold at Mrs. Chenevix’s toy-

* Lady Stafford. “Madame de Mirepoix told me t’other day, that she had known a daughter of the Countess of Grammont, an abbess in Lorrain, who, to the ambassadress’s great scandal, was ten times more vain of the blood of Hamilton than of an equal quantity of that of Grammont. She had told her much of her sister, my Lady Stafford, whom I remember to have seen when I was a child. She used to live at Twickenham when my Lady Mary Wortley, and the Duke of Wharton lived there; she had more wit than both of them.”—*Correspondence of Horace Walpole*.

shop, as Strawberry was." Yet its defects, such as they were, harmonized with the style of the old-English villa or country-house, whose high walls, deep moats, and dismal clipt hedges excluded all view but of their own dreariness. Even the narrow dusty avenues, and little green lanes, that led to Strawberry, both from Twickenham and the Thames, were all in keeping; for such were "the crack-skull roads" leading to the rural residences of the great, in former times—by-ways which obliged *La superbe Hamilton* and *La belle Muskerry* to mount their palfreys, and jog on behind their gentlemen ushers on pillions, when they left the court at Whitehall, to visit their friends in the country, or to participate in the gaieties of Newmarket and "the Wells."

Many Palladian palaces, even of a more recent day, were chosen with a view to security and shelter, rather than to taste and views. The spacious and splendid Mereworth, "though it had some prospect, was built in the centre of a moat, and sprinkled with little ponds." The shades of Strawberry, however, soon began to extend beyond their original five acres. The square-built

little toy-house swelled out more nearly to the dimensions of a feudal mansion, and was angled into cabinets, and rounded into towers, lengthened by galleries, and raised by battlements; and finally became the repertory of all those treasures that the taste, learning, and research of its owner could rescue from the depredations of time, and the neglect of tasteless and high-born ignorance.

“My collection” (says Walpole, in excuse for his passion for building and Gothicism) “is too great to be humbly lodged.” The castle, however, as now existing, did not raise its towers all of a sudden, like those of Bagatelle. It was reformed, at different times, by alterations and additions “to the old small house.” The library, and refectory, or great parlour, were entirely new-built in 1753; the gallery, round tower, great cloister, and cabinet, in 1760 and 1761; the north bed-chamber in 1770; and the Beauclerc tower, with the hexagon closet, in 1776.

The greatest hold over the imagination, the most powerful tie which time in its course lets fall upon the feelings and the mind, is that which comes of early associations; and even the book

read, the picture gazed on; in that epoch of life when all is seen decked in prismatic hues, are never forgotten, and are always over-rated in the fondness of old recollections. It happened that at such an epoch, Strawberry Hill and the “Walpoliana” were the picture and the book, to which the writer of this rapid sketch was indebted for some of those new and delightful impressions, which such objects are calculated to make on the young and the imaginative, to whom pictures and books are such novelties and such enjoyments; and being then the resident of an Irish country-house, where a blind Irish harper was her *Magnus Apollo*, and the *fadaises* of Della Crusca her *ne plus ultra* of literary acquirement, Strawberry Hill and the “Walpoliana” became her Mecca and her Talmud. To visit Strawberry Hill was a vow, made rather in devotion than in hope; while to peruse the works of its master was a desire, which time, and an intimate acquaintance with their delightful pages, has rather sharpened than diminished. Years swept on, some feathered with bird of paradise wings, and others heavily and slowly, like the sailing flight of birds of less happy omen; but

still they swept on : and scenes far more distant and sites far more remote than the “ show-box of Twickenham ” were visited.

“ The Alps, the Apennines, and river Po,” and other lauds and streams as classic, were traversed and navigated, till they had become as familiarized to the Irish wanderer’s mind as her own native Howth or Liffy,—the Tiber and Soracte of her national partiality in less travelled days ; and yet the vow to visit Strawberry, though not accomplished, was not forgotten, and it still held its place, while other vows had faded away, with the airy nothings of which they were the objects. The day, however, at last arrived,* when Strawberry was visited, and with an interest as intense as the Vatican ever excited in the breast of some long-vowed pilgrim to St. Peter’s shrine. It was just such a day as the founder himself would have selected for “ showing off ” to the “ Bedford court,” and “ Princess Emily,” or the “ De Boufflers and De Beaumonts,” when the noble host was wont to draw his bed-curtains, and ask

* June 20th, 1825.

“Harry if the sun shone?”* and beheld with a rapture he so pleasantly ridiculed himself (as indeed he did all his own peculiarities), that Strawberry was all “green and gold.” Who ever has left England to visit the finest scenery in the finest climes, and returned to glide along the shores of the Thames on such a day (days in England “few and far between,”) will scarcely hesitate to admit, what it is impossible not to feel, that, compared to those shores, there is nothing equal in beauty and richness in the river scenery of any other country in Europe. The pilgrimage to Strawberry was performed by water, in preference “to one of those two delightful roads that might be called dusty;” and the barge was anchored in one of those little creeks, where, after “holding a chapter with Chute,” the antiquarian and his friend were wont to watch the arrival of the boat, which was “freighted with old window-frames, old tombs, and old chairs, of the time of

* “Yesterday I gave a great breakfast at Strawberry Hill to the Bedford court. There was the Duke and Duchess, Lord Tavistock and Lady Caroline, my Lord and Lady Gower, Lady Caroline Egerton, &c. &c. The first thing I asked Harry was, ‘Does the sun shine?’”—*Correspondence of H. Walpole.*

Edward the Sixth." A freight was expected with an interest as intense as any Antonio of the Rialto ever felt as he watched the entrance of "his argosie" into the Lagunas of Venice: for the passion, not the object, is the thing, and there is a fanaticism in collecting, which "none but collectors know," or can appreciate. From this little creek and its stepping-stone landing-place, a scrubby sort of a bank on one side, a high dull wall on the other, (but, still a wall, "castellated after the manner of that which surrounded Aston House,") and some thirty or forty yards of a narrow rutted road, led to one of the gates of the castle, which, truth to tell, seemed from this point to be built like the towers of Monceaux, for the purpose of "seeing nothing at all." All around, the modern antique had the true characteristic feudal air of loneliness—the silence (though not the waste) which despotic power ever creates around it, and which the temporary absenteeism of the great lords of great mansions, even in England, so well represents in its effects. This, however, but deepened an illusion, which was soon dispelled by the appearance of the

custode of the castle, who replied to the tolling of the porter's bell:—no grim gruff porter of the olden times, with staff and scutcheon, and beard and belt, and buff coat and bluff air, but a smart, comely, *rondelette* little housekeeper, all frills and falbalas, welcomed our arrival, of which she had been previously forewarned,* and playing with her keys, as the ladies in the Spectator played with their fans, alertly and civilly proceeded to do the honours of Strawberry—not a little surprised, from the first starting, to find that one of the sight-seers at least had a *catalogue raisonné* in her head, which superseded the necessity of any other, and who inquired for the “Holbein chamber,” and the “Star chamber,” and the “Cabinet,” with a familiarity that astonished the housekeeper of Strawberry, full as much as the lord of Strawberry him-

* The order, elegance, and neatness in which Strawberry Hill is kept, in the absence of its present noble owner, is only too perfect for antiquarian illusions. A little touch of the dreariness and desolation of an Irish absentee's “place,” would leave nothing to lament on that subject; and the *virtuoso* visitor might then sing, with the poet of slovenly beauty, “Such sweet neglect most pleaseth me.”

self, on a similar visit, surprised the housekeeper of Althorpe.* On entering the north gate, (to those well read in the legends of Strawberry,) the "Abbot's garden" may be at once recognised, to the right, parted off by an iron skreen-work. The "Abbot's garden" has been often sneered at for its miniature dimensions, and, indeed, it is not much larger than an old lady's flower-knot in Bloomsbury;† but it is quite as large as St. Francis's garden in the magnificent abbey of Ancisa, and larger than the little garden allotted to the friars and monks of that spacious and beautiful monastery, the Certosa of Pavia. It is in strict keeping with the order of things it is meant to represent: some few and fine flowers were struggling through the crusted earth, covered with dust, probably the *dernier rejetton* of the "seeds from Sunbury," sown by that hand, which, like them, is now itself but dust. The iron skreen, though so carelessly

* "In the gallery, I found myself quite at home, and surprised the housekeeper with my familiarity with the portraits."—*Correspondence of Horace Walpole*.

† When Walpole visited Hinchinbrook, in the middle of the last century, he found the garden wondrous small, the park almost smaller, and no appearance of territory.

passed by the uninitiated as an old gate, is nevertheless a fine copy from the tomb of Roger Niger, Bishop of London, in old St. Paul's; even the common-looking blue and white china vase, in the adjoining little cloister, which looks like an old cracked foot-pail of a lady's dressing-room, has its interest, in being the vase on whose verge the "pensive Selina reclined," whose death is immortalized by the muse of Gray; and the half-defaced bas-relief head in marble, inserted in the wall, though modern sight-seers scarcely pause to look upon it, once rivetted the enamoured Tasso: it is the portrait of the object of his love and his misfortune, Eleanor D'Este. The hall of the castle is small and gloomy, paved with tiles, and lighted by arched painted-glass windows: its dimensions are in utter contradiction to the generally received ideas of Gothic halls, as taken from those described in the romances of Mrs. Radcliffe and her imitators; but Gothic apartments were not capacious. The royal chamber where the Queen of Scots took her last supper, was scarcely

* The first stanza of this ode is written on the vase:

" 'Twas on this lofty vase's side," &c.

larger than a modern clothes-press; and a hall sixty by forty, in one of the finest old castles in England, “was deemed so spacious that, like a leviathan, it swallowed up all the other chambers.” Even “the great old gallery at Woburn” was but a “bad room, powdered with little stars;” and low roofs, nests of closets, mural cabinets, and slips of galleries, were much more consonant to the manners of times when society only collected *en petits pelotons*, under the influence of friendship or fear. In modern days, on the contrary, every great mansion must have a room large enough, at least, to hold its five hundred select friends, and halls, for flambeaux and footmen, of proportionate dimensions.

On the left of the hall, (approached by a narrow passage, lighted by a painted glass window, with the arms of Queen Elizabeth, and the date 1567 carved in wood above it) is the Refectory, or “great parlour”—a great parlour thirty feet by twenty! Still this great parlour (scarcely large enough to serve for a *salon-à-boire* after dinner in a modern mansion) is

quite as large as the *salas* of the old Lombardy castles, or as the *sals-à-manger* of the ancient châteaux of France. It has many interesting if not precious pictures; such as “the Conversation,” by Reynolds, which represents the old library at Strawberry, and the group round the table in its centre, consisting of the witty George Selwyn, Lord Edgecomb, and Mr. Williams; the second Lady Walpole (the Moll Skerrett of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu), as a shepherdess, and a group of the Waldegrave beauties. Here, too, beakers of Indian porcelain, pails of Chelsea china, and vases of Roman *faïence* mingle their remote epochs in amicable confusion, against all rule and chronological *virtù*; while skreens, worked and embroidered by celebrated coronetted beauties, (though interesting to the noble owner, to whom so many of such tributes were presented) now only look like the rubbish furnished from the looms of the Minervas of a Paddington boarding-school to the parlours of their parents in Lincoln’s Inn Fields. The ancient bellows and altar candlestick of the ante-room, have their own charms for the antiquarian, as Dry-

den's head and Cibber's bust* possess for the dramatic amateur. The china closet, at the first glimpse, looks like any body's china-closet, and, to the unlearned, is neither striking nor interesting; but to those who can trace in its little ceiling the roof of the pretty room at the Borghese Villa at Frascati, or a chimney-piece copied from an old window at the ancient seat of the Grimstones (Broadfield Hall, in Essex), it is not unimportant. Regiments of Worcester china bowls, phalanxes of Sevres mustard-pots, with cups, and dishes, and narrow-necked bottles, and wide-mouthed ewers, and mugs, and jugs, of no very striking appearance, are turned from with a sneer, by those who know not the history of this frail but venerable collection. But when cups have been painted by Pietro Cortona, and plates by Raffael, and dishes by Giulio Romano; when green-glass bottles turn out to be Roman lacrymatories, and a china figure to be Michael Angelo's Bacchus, then the China-closet becomes a precious museum: and one regrets that its dimmed stained-glass windows do not throw more

* Colley Cibber gave this bust to Mrs. Clive, Lord Orford's fair friend—another equivocal Stella.

light upon treasures consecrated alike by the hand of time and of genius. The Yellow bed-chamber would be simply a yellow bed-chamber (an unbecoming colour, *par parenthèse*, for a “sleeping beauty,” if a brunette, who should always choose *couleur de rose*,) but for its pictures; among which those always amusing portraits (*pour le moins*) of the heroes and heroines of the Grammont memoirs, long detain spectators, who, like Walpole, and the writer of this sketch, have “the Grammont madness upon them.”* The principal of these worthies is that modernly white-washed insolvent in morals, Charles the Second himself, with some half dozen of his own and his brother’s sultanas, the Sedley, the Richmond, the Portsmouth, the Cleveland, the Churchill, and “Mistress Philadelphia Saunders.” This group, nineteen in number, (Sacharissa excepted) made a part of the collection of Jervas, the friend and laureate-painter of Pope.

The Breakfast-parlour, with its hangings of blue and white paper, and its draperies of blue and white linen, has, according to the sumptuousness

* A phrase of Horace Walpole.

of modern furniture, a very ordinary appearance. But when its interesting miniatures catch the eye, its “ Venitia, Lady Digby, that extraordinary beauty of an extraordinary fame,” its Mary Lepell (Lady Hervey), its *belle des belles* (the Duchess de Montbazon), and its Princess Palatine (of Madame de Sévigné’s letters), its unfortunate Earl of Essex, and its heroic Charlotte de la Trémouille, with a score of other historical heads; then the little blue and white breakfast-room is lingered in with pleasure, and left with regret, even for the green closet, with its multitude of curious pictures, or for the great armoury, whose chief relic is the suit of mail worn by the great Earl of Warwick, when he marched upon Westminster-hall, in that happy epoch when parliaments were to be awed by a man in armour, and laws submitted to spears and quivers—the good old times!

The Library has all the antique caste and sombre colouring of a private room (once called closet) of the great men, and the studious ones of the middle ages. The books are ranged in pierced Gothic arches; the chimney-piece a tomb from Westminster Abbey; and shields, arms, and lozenges, fill

up every corner. The pictures are curious and historical, and the fine old silver-gilt clock, the gift of Henry the Eighth to Anna Boleyn, presents a piece of ponderous gallantry, very different from the *bijou* of *or moulu* (often a poem in design, a picture in combination) which a modern *merveilleux* offers to the object of his lukewarm devotions, showy and light as the times it represents, and the hours of her whose actions it does *not* govern. Among the rare books in the splendid collection of this fine library, "The Book of the French Portraits in the Time of Francis the First," which belonged to Brantome, who has written in the precious pages, in his own precious autograph, the names of many of the originals of the pictures, is *the* book!

The Star-Chamber! with its horrible name of fearful associations (the boudoir of the Stuarts, where, alas, their subjects *boudoient beaucoup*)—the Star-Chamber of Strawberry is only an innocent little room, with green walls powdered with little stars, like a modern French paper. Its treasures consist of a fine collection of medals, and it leads by a "trunked ailed" passage to the Holbein Chamber, which looks like a pet-room of Catherine

of Arragon ; small, gloomy, and magnificent, with chairs from Glastonbury Abbey, and the red hat of her great enemy Wolsey, lying beside that royal-looking bed, whose velvet hangings and waving plumes put one in mind of the restless nights and uneasy dreams which the crowned heads who slept on such couches were wont to endure, when the heads themselves were never very sure upon the shoulders of the despots who bore them. There are too few pictures of the “ great original” whose name gives interest to this room to entitle it to such a distinction ; what there are, however, are fine, and all the historical pictures are curious and interesting.

The Gallery, long and narrow, in spite of its ceiling from Henry the Eighth’s Chapel, will remind the Italian traveller of the gallery in the royal palace at Turin. Its hangings of crimson damask have no better effect than the crimson damask paper of the present day. It has doors from the Abbey at St. Albans, and recesses from the tomb of Archbishop Bouchier at Canterbury, and yet it is a light, splendid, and cheerful apartment. Its pictures, busts, &c. would

fill a tolerably sized catalogue; and besides “Mrs. Keppel in white,” and “Lady Dysart in pink,” and a hundred other such rainbow-dressed “Cynthias of the minute,”* there are a number of the works of the best masters, particularly of Zuccherò, Vandyke, Jansen, Poussin, &c.; but here, as in the whole collection, the pictures are more interesting as historical portraits, than rare or valuable as paintings, and many of them would curl the critical nose of the modern virtuosi, who, having posted through Italy, return to buy Rembrandts and Raphaels, manufactured for the markets at Amsterdam or the fairs of Leipsic.

The Round Room, which leads to the *sanctum sanctorum* of the edifice, (the Tribune,) is not to be passed through with careless glance or rapid step, like an ordinary antechamber. It has the merit of all the apartments of Strawberry, in

* Among these, and far superior to them all in grace and loveliness, is the picture, by Sir J. Reynolds, of Maria, second daughter of Sir Edward Walpole, widow of James Earl of Waldegrave, and wife of William Henry, Duke of Gloucester, brother of King George the Third. Walpole’s own portrait of this favourite niece, on her wedding-day, (in a letter to his friend G. Montague,) is equally lovely.

offering an ample study to the antiquarian, or to the curious in the economy of furniture. Its chairs of Aubusson tapestry, its chimney-piece from the tomb of Edward the Confessor, its ceiling from old St. Paul's, and surbases from the monument of Queen Eleanor in Westminster Abbey, have each their specific merit and interest; while the wreck of Lady Betty Germaine's collection, and the plunder of Penshurst (from the apartments of Sidney "and Sidney's sister") have contributed largely to enrich and adorn it, and to awaken pleasant associations by its inspection. From the former, are the silver chenets, vases, and sconces, which ornament the chimney-piece; from the latter is the fine portrait, by Vandyke, of Lady Dorothy Percy, Countess of Carlisle, and others.

Over the door is a most characteristic picture of Vandyke's celebrated love, "Mistress Lemon," painted *con amore* by the enamoured artist; she represents Judith, and brandishes a sword, but

" There lurks more peril in those eyes,
Than twenty of such swords."

Here, too, is Salvator Rosa's fine* picture of Jacob travelling from Laban. Whatever was consecrated by the pencil of that great master was precious to the lord of Strawberry, who first acquired a knowledge and professed an adoration of his genius, while yet a boy, in the gallery of his own paternal Houghton.† When Lord Or-

* I have mentioned this fine picture in the catalogue of Salvator Rosa's works now in England. But I had not then seen it; nor was I then aware how enthusiastic an admirer of Salvator Lord Orford was, until I recently read his admirable introduction to the "*Ædes Walpoleanæ*." In the passage I allude to, he observes,—“The greatest genius Naples ever produced resided generally at Rome—a genius equal to any that city itself ever bore. This was the great Salvator Rosa! His thoughts, his expression, his landscape, his knowledge of the force of shade, and his masterly management of horror and distress, have placed him in the first class of painters. In Lord Townsend's ‘*Belisarius*’ one sees a majesty of thought equal to Raphael, an expression great as Poussin's. In Lord Orford's ‘*Prodigal*’ is represented the extremity of misery and low nature, not foul and burlesque, like Michel Angelo Caravaggio's, nor minute, circumstantial, and laborious, like the Dutch painters. Salvator Rosa was a poet and a satirist. Here again was a union of those arts: his pictures contain the genius and true end of satire, though, heightened and expressive as his pictures are, they still mean more than they speak. Pliny describes Salvator in ‘*Timanthes* :’—*In omnibus ejus operibus intelligitur plus semper quam pingitur,*” &c.

† One of the most beautiful and tender pieces of epistolary remi-

ford designed his tribune, he doubtless had the tribune of the Imperial Gallery at Florence in his head. The tribune at Strawberry is, however, of a less simple form. It is a square, with semicircular recesses in the middle of each side, difficult to describe, but very effective to look at; its sober stone-coloured walls are admirably relieved by its rich gold ornaments, and other splendid decorations of every kind, and every age in the history of the arts. The beautiful Gothic architecture of St. Albans has furnished the models for its windows and niches; and its finely-fretted roof, borrowed from the Chapter-house at York, is terminated by a star of yellow glass, which throws a sort of Claude Lorraine tint over the whole precious apartment. Amidst a number of fine antique busts and statues, is raised a simple Gothic altar of black and gold; it is the tomb of the children of Edward the Third in Westminster Abbey, and its slab of black marble is

niscences that ever was written, is Horace Walpole's letter, dated from Houghton, 1761, after fifteen years' absence, and beginning, "Here I am at Houghton—alone," &c.—*Correspondence*, vol. ii. p. 226.

covered with precious relics and *objets d'art* of every time and description, silver filligree dishes, vases of amethyst, and sconces of agate, with carved ivory by Verskovis; while a cabinet of rose-wood, with panels and sculpture by Germaine of Paris, curiously carved, rises above it, and contains one of the finest collections of enamels and miniatures perhaps in England: some are by Lens, Carlo Dolce, Boit, Zink, Groth, Isaac Oliver,* Petitot, Liotard, &c.;—many are original portraits of the historical characters they re-

* In no other collection is to be seen in any good preservation any number of the works of Isaac and Peter Oliver. I forget whether Raphael's exquisite missal, with its unique miniatures, is in this cabinet or in the library.

Among the curious enamels is one of Charles the Second. It is in an old enamelled blue case, and is said to be one which he gave when in Holland to a young lady, to whom he stood godfather. In her extreme old age she sold it. There is another fine miniature of James the Second, when Duke of York, which is remarkable as being purchased at the sale of Mrs. Danet, daughter to his handsome bold-looking mistress, Mrs. Godfrey, of whom there is also a miniature by Petitot. The most interesting among the historical miniatures of this fine collection are, the clever Queen of Bohemia, the most gifted of all the Stuarts; Charles the First, by Petitot; Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, by Isaac Oliver; and Sir Anthony Shirley, in a dress half English, half Persian, done when he was ambassador from the Sophy of Persia.

present, and others are fine copies from Luca Giordano, Vanloo, and Holbein; some set in the exquisitely little carved frames of Lejarée, and others mounted in brilliants or precious stones. Here, in the immortal bloom of enamel, still smiles the coarse but beautiful Cleveland, the intriguing but *piquante* Portsmouth, “ Mistress Godfrey, of the York seraglio,” and the lovely Countess d’Olonne (one of the heroines of De Retz’s Memoirs) who had a seraglio of her own, though she is here represented as Diana. Here, too, leers and lours the royal *petit-maître* of despotism, as he was wont to do at Versailles, in the midst of profligate mistresses and slavish courtiers—Louis the Fourteenth, surrounded by De Fontanges, De la Vallière, *et toute quante*; while the wives of England’s Blue Beard are to be found with all their heads on; and the lovely Madame Mazarin, looking as if she had just escaped from St. Evremont’s letters, accounts for the passion of the enamoured philosopher, in loveliness far more bewitching than regular. Vases, cups, and chalices, in gems, jewels, and chrystals, the great seals of great kings, and the pretty *bi oux* of great

ladies, fill up this beautiful *répertoire* of all that is precious and curious, with rings to satisfy an alderman's wife, and snuff-boxes in number and beauty *à faire crever d'envie* Beau B, or Lord P; while vessels of wrought silver, and cups scooped out of amethysts, or set with brilliants, recall the treasures of the *guarda roba* of the Medici, when Benvenuto Cellini worked for their amusement, and had (as it sometimes fares with talent patronized by grandeur) his labour for his pains. Pictures,* lamps, and bronzes, fill up every part of this interesting room, and one leaves it with dazzled eyes, and sated curiosity, by the sombre little passage and small closet adjoining, (full to stuffing, like every other part of the edifice, with objects of curiosity or of art) for that great north bed-chamber, where the readers of French memoirs, and the adorers of Grammont, (or rather of Antoine Hamilton,) may feast their eyes and associations to satiety. The Great North

* Among these the most striking are the Temptation of St. Anthony, by Teniers. Soldiers at Cards, by Vandyke. His own Head, by Himself, and a portrait of Frances Howard, the celebrated Countess of Essex, by Isaac Oliver.

Bed-chamber, considered as a bed-chamber, is *en grande tenue*, according to the old style of magnificence ; its royal canopied bed is plumed with ostrich feathers, and hung with rich tapestry of Aubusson, surrounded by a carpet of curious needlework, and flanked by chairs of ebony and gold, too heavy to move, and too fine to sit in. Its crimsoned damask walls are covered with the most precious portraits. Over the chimney is a great picture of Henry the Eighth, and his children,* and a bust of Francis the Second, the boy-husband of the unfortunate Queen of Scots. Immediately opposite to the bed stands that figure, which occasioned so many sleepless nights to the *gallants* of Whitehall, “La belle Jennings,” afterwards Duchess of Tyrconnel, whose *bon mot* to James the Second, when, as Lady Lieutenant, she received him at the Castle of Dublin, shows her not to have been of the order of stupid beauties, or like Mademoiselle Stuart, *aussi bête que belle* ; her friend, Mademoiselle Hamilton, (Countess de Grammont,) is placed near her. There is also in this chamber an

* See a description of this piece in “The Anecdotes of Painting.”

admirable group, the rehearsal of an opera, with the famous Mrs. Toft, the *prima donna* of her day, at the harpsichord. Its *pendant* is a scene from the "Beggar's Opera," by Hogarth, with portraits of the original performers.* The charming portraits of Ninon de l'Enclos,† Hortense Mancini, and Madame de Maintenon, long detain the attention, even from the wonders of the "glass closet," where a silver perfume box, by Benvenuto Cellini, wedding-gloves of the patriot Hampden's bride, and the trunked ones of King James, with Von Trump's tobacco-box, and "a silver-gilt apostle spoon," belonging to Lord knows who, offer a curious and heterogeneous variety, and mark the successful and arduous researches of the collector after all that was rare and old. The Beauclerc closet, dedicated to the elegant works of the accomplished Lady Diana Beauclerc, the

* Among these is Miss Fenton (afterwards Duchess of Bolton) as Polly.

† It is of this picture that Walpole says, "You see Ninon tries to look charming, and she only looks tipsy." The tradition of this picture is, that Ninon herself gave it to Lady Sandwich, daughter of Wilmot, Earl of Rochester; her grandson (Miss Rae's Lord Sandwich,) gave it to Horace Walpole.

round bed-room, and the great cloister, follow in sight-seeing succession, and each has its separate interest and character. In the second are some fine portraits, and many very pleasing ones : among the latter may be reckoned the portraits of Lady Suffolk, the mistress *titré* of George the Second, Mrs. Barry and Mrs. Clive, the tragic and comic muses of their time ;—there is also a fine head of Oliver Cromwell's mother. But the Round Bed-room is to Strawberry, what Naples is to the rest of Italy, the *ne plus ultra* of curiosity : attention is exhausted, eyes are dazzled, and expectation satiated by the time it is reached ;* and it is with a pleasure unspeakable, that one passes through the great cloister, into the refreshing grounds and gardens, without even stopping to examine those gate-piers, which are taken from the tomb of William de Luda in the cathedral of Ely.

* I really forget in what order of seeing we visited a handsome modernly-furnished saloon, in which the most interesting object is a fine, full-length and very beautiful portrait of the present noble lady of the castle, the Countess of Waldegrave. I think our cicerone told us it was by Sir William Beechey. Both as a portrait and a painting, it may stand the test with any of the Lely and Kneller beauties in the adjoining rooms.

The Shell Seat, at the end of the pretty winding shaded walk, which is within view of the Gothic chapel, offers a *bel riposo* after the fatigue which pleasure ever imposes. This shell seat is a very curious carving in oak, designed by the celebrated Bentley. The shell is a *chama*. Here the three Graces of the Paphos of Strawberry* were wont to repose, to the delight of their flattered and elegant host, who saw even his friends with the eye of an artist. There is but little in the grounds of Strawberry to detain the steps of the visitor, except its beautiful little Chapel in the garden: an edifice of as true Gothic taste and design, as its being copied, *à la rigueur*, from par-

* “ Strawberry Hill is grown a perfect Paphos—it is the land of beauties. On Wednesday the Duchesses of Hamilton and Richmond, and Lady Ailesbury, dined there, and the two latter stayed all night. There never was so pretty a sight as to see them all three sitting in the shell. A thousand years hence, when I begin to grow old, if that can ever be, I shall talk of that event, and tell young people how much handsomer the women of my time were, than they will be then. I shall say, Women alter now; I remember Lady Ailesbury looking handsomer than her daughter, the Duchess of Richmond, as they were sitting in the shell on my terrace with the Duchess of Hamilton, one of the famous Gunnings! Yesterday, t’other more famous Gunning, Lady Coventry, dined there!”
Correspondence of Horace Walpole, vol. ii.

ticular parts of the Cathedral of Salisbury, and the Abbey of St. Edmundsbury, can make it. The interior has all the character of the cells or oratories appertaining to churches or monasteries in Catholic countries:—its altar-piece and altarpicture are curious from their antiquity; the beautiful windows of painted glass are emblazoned with saints and arms and the effigies of kings and queens; a superb shrine faces the door of entrance. In the front stands a superb crucifix, inlaid with mother-of-pearl; on either side, a King of France, and the Virgin Mary, in bronze and *fäience*, stand upon consoles. The story of the marvellous “*trasferimento*” of this “holy house” is thus told on a tablet over the door. “The shrine in front was brought, in the year 1768, from the church of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome, when the new pavement was laid there. This shrine was erected in the year 1256, over the bodies of the holy martyrs, Simplicius, Faustina, and Beatrix, by John James Capoccio and Vinia his wife; and was the work of Peter Cavalini, who made the tomb of Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey.”

Such is Strawberry, the cabinet, the toy, the retreat of the gifted son of a great minister, whose talents, intellect, and observation, well fitted him to run the career of his ambitious father: and who, had he been an ambitious or an interested man, had eminent opportunities of indulging either passion to their fullest extent. "I am unambitious, I am disinterested, but I am vain," observes Mr. Walpole, in a letter to Lord Chatham. Into this frankly acknowledged foible, Strawberry Hill, and its precious collection, entered largely; but the vanity of possessing and showing off this monument of his taste, and knowledge, and industry, and the objects of art they had gathered round him, did not blind Mr. Walpole to the incongruities of the whole, nor to the objections which the pedantry of *archi-virtu* and the cant of criticism would eventually level at the *hochet* of one, who had shown so little mercy to the unfounded pretensions and presumptuous mediocrity of that numerically powerful body, in all communities, whose claims to distinction are unsupported by those endowments which should alone command it:—

“ In a house, affecting not only obsolete architecture, but pretending to an observance of the custom even in the furniture, the mixture of modern portraits and French porcelaine, and Greek and Roman sculpture, may seem heterogeneous. In truth, I did not mean to make my home so gothic as to exclude convenience and modern luxury. But I do not mean to defend, by argument, a small capricious house. It was built to please my own taste, and realize my own visions. Could I describe the gay but tranquil scene where it stands, and add the beauty of the landscape to the romantic cast of the mansion, it would raise more pleasing sensations than a dry list of curiosities can excite : at least the prospect would recal the good humour of those who might be disposed to condemn the fantastic fabric, and to think it a very proper habitation—as it was the scene that inspired—the author of ‘ The Castle of Otranto ! ’ ”

ARTS AND ARTISTS.

I NEVER raise my head from my writing-desk and look around me, without being struck by the conviction, that though our inferiors may admire, and our superiors notice us, for some quality of intellect which has contributed to their ease, or their amusement, it is by our equals only, or those who have pursued the same objects by the same efforts, (in various degrees) that we are truly appreciated. The apartment in which I usually scribble, is a little repository of precious objects, offered by those, who, like myself (but in a far more eminent and successful career) have owed their celebrity to their own efforts and genius. There are few eminent artists in Europe whom I have numbered on the list of my personal friends, to whom I do not stand indebted for some gracious and generous offering of good will and esteem : and who in return for the idle hour's amusement afforded them by some trifling production of mine, have not

repaid me twenty times over, by works of art or literature, which mark their feeling to merit (real or supposed), and are monuments of their own superior abilities: Canova, Denon, Gerard, Robert Le Fevre, David, Lawrence, Cosway, Berthon, Bartolini, Raphael Morghen, Mayer, Stroeling, Davis, Turnerelli, Bate, Behnes, and many other younger friends,* who have already given their

* The arts are now making a struggling effort in Ireland, where there is no want of genius, though great want of all means of rendering it available. The commodity is there; but where is the market? Two young artists of distinguished merit, the pupils of the school of sculpture in the Dublin Institution, are now I believe studying with their distinguished countryman Behnes, and have produced two original compositions of considerable talent. Their names are Panormo and Gallagher. Of the young artists, with whom I am personally acquainted, Mr. Lover, as a miniature painter, and Mr. Mulrennan, as a faithful and exquisite copyist of the old masters, only want a fair field, both of study and encouragement, to become distinguished in the art to which they are devoted. But though Ireland has given birth to some of the most eminent artists of the British school, to Jarvis, Bindon, Roberts, Robertson, Hamilton, Barret, Shea, Barry, Ashworth, Comerford, Smith, Kirk, &c. &c., still it can never be the country of the arts. It may produce artists for other markets; it will never have a mart of its own. In the present state of the country, I would rather bind my son apprentice to the meanest mechanical trade, than see him devote his time, talent, and energy, to the arts in the service of a nation, where excellence can only tend to generate disappointed ambition and indignant and ineffectual regret.

promise to posterity, though yet unknown to that fame, which can only come through time and industry, the true and best friends of even the highest genius.

Such are *the great*, to whom alone talent should stand indebted; and these are glorious times, when patronage is reduced to a party given and returned by the man of rank to the man of letters; and when the mutually exchanged rites of hospitality, replace the literary dependance of the Spencers and the Savages, or the insolent protection of the Medici and D'Este.

“ NO ONE A PROPHET IN HIS OWN
COUNTRY.”

AN immensity has been written on absenteeism, (I have written a volume on it myself,) yet it remains pretty much where it was. Every body sees and feels, (at least every body who resides in Ireland does so,) that the absence of the rich proprietors of the soil works misery for the country which endures it. Yet Macculloch's logic is very close, if not very convincing. Under these circumstances, argument will do nothing. The deficiency is in facts. The whole data for arriving at a satisfactory conclusion have not yet been obtained ; and one observation or experiment, judiciously conducted, is worth an hundred *ergos*. Let Mr. Macculloch, therefore, come and pay us a visit, somewhat longer than the few days he bestowed upon us at his last *avatar*, and his truly national perspicacity will not long remain at fault. Let me take this opportunity of recommending

Ireland “to all and every one whom it may concern,” as one of the richest *cadavres* that ever offered itself to the inspection of the morbid anatomist,—one of the best furnished laboratories for political analysis. No where will the suckling statesman and political economist find a richer harvest of elementary instruction, in all that it is necessary for a legislator and a citizen to avoid.

Without, however, pausing to consider what are the effects of absenteeism on the country, it may be worth while to inquire what are its consequences on the individual himself,—a theme of some importance, that has but seldom been touched upon. It is ordinarily, and in some degree justly, said, that the absentee loses immeasurably by expatriation. Unquestionably the person who derives all his importance and consequence from the possession of “lands and beeves,” will sink into the class of non-proprietors, in a foreign country; and with all his expenditure, will find it very difficult to impress on his continental acquaintance a proper respect for his title-deeds and his manors. I remember a noble lord, who held a high office in the British revenue, being much

surprised, and more mortified, by finding that his official dignity procured him neither respect nor forbearance from the administrators of the French Douane. The same must pretty generally be the case with our travelling Justice Shallows, who, however capable of committing themselves, can commit no body else, beyond the boundaries of their own county. The case, however, is something different with those whose qualifications are more personal, and whose titles to esteem may be transplanted more readily than the family oaks. Man is no where an apostle in his own country ; but the proverb is only true, in all its intensity, in Ireland. In a country where every one is morbidly desirous of distinction, and where the master caste has so long been every thing, personal qualities are disregarded by the privileged few, and are objects only of jealousy and dislike with the degraded many. In Ireland, there is as little affection for merit, as there is market ; nor could it possibly be otherwise, in a country so governed as Ireland has been. It is not so much the fault, as the misfortune of the people ; but whether fault or misfortune, it is a very good reason for render-

ing absentees every individual who feels within himself the desire for personal consideration, and the talent to command it by other means than "taking the trouble," as Figaro says, "to be born to an estate." It is not alone that such is the disposition of the public in Ireland. Were it a theatre as well disposed to reward and appreciate great endowments, as it is precisely the contrary, it would still be too limited in extent, to afford that exciting and intoxicating approbation, which rewards the labours of genius in other and happier countries.

To those who have established claims on the public, or have been fortunate enough to captivate its good will, absenteeism from Ireland is almost a duty to self; and nearly all the eminent individuals, born and educated in that country, have thought themselves justified in leaving it. Swift himself, the patriot *par excellence* among Irish literary characters, was a resident in his own land from necessity; and the sense of that necessity pressed for ever on his mind, embittering his latter days, and discolouring all his views, if it were not among the immediate

causes of his deplorable insanity. For my own part, small as are my claims on public attention, I have every reason, perhaps, to be satisfied with whatever portion of esteem I may in any country be honoured with ; but in all things there are degrees, and it is not vanity to feel and to appreciate the superior kindness of strangers, and to be sensible to distinctions, of which the worthiest and the wisest might be proud.

Upon the score of pleasure also, the absentee, it must be allowed, has a decided advantage. Divided and distracted by parties, a prey to constant turbulence, and to frequent insurrections, Ireland could never have offered much attraction, to stay the foot of the absentee. In the best times, the pleasures of the Irish capital were derived more from the hilarity and social temperament of the people, than from the physical resources of refined and enlightened amusement. Since the union, even these have "made themselves air, into which they vanished;" and the transfer of the Irish legislature to London, and the importation of British methodism to Dublin, have left the latter city nothing but a short and fitful season of balls and

assemblies. All public places of amusement have closed, or have dwindled into insignificance and neglect; and however much it may be lamented, it cannot be wondered, that those who are masters of their own time, and have wealth at their disposal, should *promener leur ennui ailleurs*, and seek in foreign countries for those agreeable sensations and exciting pleasures which are not to be found at home.

To the student, the artist, and the philosopher, the resources of Ireland are still more limited. The libraries and collections which draw this class of persons to the greater capitals of Europe, are wholly wanting; nor is there a sufficiency of congenial talent to make society, to excite emulation, and encourage zeal. The Irish gentleman, who has been blessed or cursed with a superior education and a refined taste, is compelled to emigrate, or to mortify and place in abeyance his natural impulses. It is not, therefore, so much a matter of reproach to the absentee, as of praise and admiration to him, who from patriotism, devotes his time and his faculties to his own country, that the one resides in foreign countries, and the other at

home. It is idle and vain to talk of duties, and to insist that the holders of estates are bound by their tenure to stand by the country that feeds them. Duties are only respected as far as they carry with them their own reward ; and a nation has no right to claim the residence of its proprietors, if it will not, or cannot, cultivate the arts of peace, and make that residence desirable in itself. Whenever the misfortunes of Ireland have become matter of legislative discussion, British statesmen have coolly turned round upon the friends of that country and reproached them with its absenteeism, as if that were the sole and exclusive cause of all that it has suffered, and all that it must still continue to suffer. But, if even this were the truth, to whom does Ireland owe this plague spot in her social condition ? I speak it not in anger, or in a spirit of wanton reproach, but the cause of all this calamity is to be found in antecedents, of which the policy of England is the first link. Long and persevering acts of national benevolence and of legislative wisdom are requisite, to do away the fatal injury of her proconsular regime, and to

wipe away the stain which her character has acquired, through her wanton neglect and wilful destruction of the resources of Ireland.

PATRICK'S DAY.

“St. Patrick was a jontlemon,
And came of dacent people.”

IRISH SONG.

I WAS awakened this morning at daylight by the cry under my windows, of “Green shamrock, fine shamrock;” and the cry has been repeated as incessantly and as annoyingly the whole day, as that of “hot cross buns” is in London on a Good Friday. The Irish, by the bye, with all their catholicism, do not eat cross buns; which is as exclusively a protestant, as it is a cockney fashion of idolatry.

The national festival in Ireland, with the supremacy of the saint, to whom it is dedicated, is still maintained with unabated devotion and conviviality throughout the kingdom, from the castle to the

cabin. For a week before it arrives, the beggars wish you “many happy Patrick’s days;” Patrick’s crosses are sold in every street; every field in the vicinity of the metropolis is crowded with searchers after “green shamrocks;” and the dealers in this national emblem (most appropriate to a people accustomed to be trodden on) carry on a bustling and a thriving trade, till the whole population comes forth like “Birnam wood to Dunsinane’s high hill.” From the lowest mendicant to the lord lieutenant,* all are supplied with shamrocks. Not only “bishops, priests, and deacons,” of the church, as by law established, decorate their consecrated persons with the venerable emblem of a catholic saint; but the law itself, and its great conservators, “prank it in green,” like the “merry

* Their Graces the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland, though in the noviciate of their Irish Regency, had the condescension to appear, this day (March 17th, 1829) at the windows of the state apartments of the castle, with large shamrocks decorating their persons; while hundreds of the common people danced in the court beneath, to the enlivening air of Patrick’s Day, played by the band of the guard.

“Chi ben principia ha il mezzo del opra.”

men " of Sherwood forest. From the protestant keeper of the king's conscience to the papistical attorney, who has no conscience to keep, all are adorned, though not distinguished by the shamrock.

As soon as the domestic day begins, and breakfast is announced, the head servant in every house makes his appearance with a salver of shamrocks, each tied up into a *bouquet*, presenting one to each of the family, and usually receiving a *buona mano*, "to drown his shamrock in St. Patrick's pot." The fumes of whiskey punch, the proper libation to the patron saint, arise from every kitchen and servants' hall, throughout the country; and the court ball given at the Castle of Dublin, in that noble temple dedicated at once to the saint, and to Terpsichore, St. Patrick's hall, surpasses in numbers and in splendour even the like celebration of the king's birthday. Feathers wave, lappets flutter, diamonds sparkle; and the red bench still presents the descendants of the Geraldines, the De Burgos, and the Brien Borrus, with six hundred years' nobility at their backs, upholding the patron

saint of their ancient dynasties, in the very face of the protestant church, and of the constitution of 1688.

When all are seated, (and what an amphitheatre of beauty presents itself to the eye of the lucky stranger, who chances to visit the Irish court on a Patrick's day,) and when the vice-regal procession has passed up the centre of the hall, and the representatives of majesty have taken their seats on the throne, once consecrated by the august person of majesty itself; then the national air is struck up with an enlivening influence, to which even Lord F——'s protestant heart might beat responsively. Chamberlains and masters of the ceremony, officiating as high priests on this most catholic festival, arrange the "office" to be celebrated, in honour of the merriest saint in the calendar; to whose glory, and to whose tune, the beautiful youths of his own Ireland dance, with a devotional ardour, far beyond the saltatory piety of the zealous jumpers of Wales, or of the dancing dervishes of Constantinople. None of the cold forms and still-life movements of the quadrille, invented by philosophers,

“atheists and politicians,” neutralize its fervour. Fifty couples, danced down in dislocating springs and hops, attest the fanaticism of the devotees; and every joyous face and glittering eye, seems to say, with the disciples of a certain Italian saint, “plead for us, we dance with you.”

St. Patrick's day is the saturnalia of all the elderly gentlemen, who have not “forgot themselves to stone.” Many veterans *de la vieille roche*, go through a course of champooing for the occasion, and anoint their joints, like the athletes of old, to attest their adherence to the creed of their fathers, and preach the doctrine of Paddy O'Rafferty, and of the Cameronian rant, in opposition to the heresy and schism of *Di tanti palpiti*, *dos-à-dos*, and “*cavalier seul*.” This, too, is the hegira of ladies of a certain age, who, taking flight from the fatal pre-eminence to which Time had consigned them, bring the *weight* of their personal consequence to the support of an oppressed faith; and yielding to the flattering proposition of some young aid-de-camp on service, (and very hard service too,) drag the “feathered mercury” after

them, down the middle, and up again, to the interesting intonations of "go to the devil and shake yourself," or, "Patrick's day in the morning."*

At last arrives the *media nocte* of the well worshipped saint, who for once sees the religious acrimony and christian animosity of the country he vainly protects, laid at the feet of national gaiety and sociality. Supper is announced; and the feast of the *cocagne* in France, or Naples, was but a luncheon, to this truly catholic entertainment. Hands that never met before, meet now on the necks of flasks and decanters. Fingers habitually raised in mutual scorn, are now busy in the same pie; while protestant nods at papist, in a tolerant hob-nob from "humble port to imperial tokay." Sir Harcourt takes wine with the author of "Florence Macarthy," and Counsellor O'Connell is helped to the wing of a pheasant by a pro-

* This is the only occasion on which country dances are performed at the Irish Court. The ball on Patrick's night is always opened by the lively dance of "Patrick's day." The Dowagers of both sexes then come into play; and the "*Irish trot*" of many a veteran belle, recalls the good old times of the Rutland Court; when French quadrilles were "undreamed of in the philosophy" of the dancing of that noted epoch.

testant archbishop, with a mental reservation against all other "wings," in all other places.

Again, the dance is resumed; hearts, lost or mislaid, before supper, are detected on the person of the thief, after it. Partners, led out for a waltz, remain partners for life; and St. Patrick becomes the Hymen of the year, insuring the perpetuity of his rites, by the recollections which every recurrence of his joyous festival is sure to bring with it. Oh! that all the saints (St. Athanasius, the great protestant saint, included,) were thus worshipped! That all saints "militant here" in Ireland, maintained this spirit of social kindness, this interchange of social courtesy. To those who, like myself, have made the sacrifice, (the greatest that a true Irishman, and still more, a true Irishwoman can make,) that of living in the country, where patriotism has long been not only proscription, but martyrdom, what a change would such an order of things produce! what a perpetual recurrence of bitter sensations would it spare! what natural talent (now kept down by party spirit,) would explode, to illuminate the murky atmosphere of political disunion

like the bursting of a sky-rocket on the midnight gloom of a winter's night ! Who, that loves Ireland, that loves humanity, would not drop a bead, or light a taper, to propitiate the saint, who would work this best and greatest of miracles ? Be it hoped, that this Patrick's day, 1829, will be the harbinger of an whole year of national festivals ; and that he, who has represented the good saint on earth, by an act, which every Irish saint in the calendar will bless, will accept of this humble offering from one, who has proved herself no

“ Swiss to fight for any God or king ; ”

and who, true to her old vocation, flung no tributary laurel under the chariot wheels of the conqueror at Waterloo, yet now gratefully lays her shamrock at the feet of the emancipator of Ireland.

THE END.

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